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SONGS OF TWO WORLDS

*By the same Author.*

## SONGS OF TWO WORLDS.

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HENRY S. KING & CO., LONDON.

# SONGS OF TWO WORLDS

(THIRD SERIES)

BY

A NEW WRITER

MORRIS, SIR LEWIS  
"11

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Μηδὲν ἄγαν.

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SECOND EDITION

HENRY S. KING & Co.

65 CORNHILL, AND 12 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

1876

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1876

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## P R E F A C E.



THE writer fulfils in the present volume the promise made in the last,—of a third and concluding series of “Songs of Two Worlds.”

The result of his former attempts hardly leaves him, as he could wish, at liberty to bring his contributions to English verse to a definite close. But to become a voluminous verse-writer is so far from his desire, that the chance of his writing no more is at least sufficiently great to warrant him in bidding his many unknown friends a cordial, though perhaps not a final, farewell.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.



THE writer's warmest acknowledgements are due to the whole of the critical press and to the public for their generous appreciation of his verse, and for the very flattering expression of their wish that the present volume may not be his last.

If he should not again challenge their favourable verdict, it will be from any cause rather than ingratitude; but, in any case, he feels it best that "Songs of Two Worlds" should now come to an end.

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# SONGS OF TWO WORLDS.

(THIRD SERIES.)



## *SONG.*

TELL me where I may quench the too fierce fire  
Of hope and of desire ;  
Tell me how I may from my soul remove  
The sting and pain of love ;  
Tell me, and I will give to thee,  
Magician, my whole soul in fee.

And yet I know not what of fit reward,  
For enterprise so hard,  
I might convey thee in a loveless soul,  
Whose currents no more roll :  
A corpse, corruptible and cold,  
Were no great prize to have and hold.

Time only is it that will deign to take  
Such things for their own sake,  
Preferring age to youth, grey hairs to brown,  
And to bright smiles the frown.  
Time takes the hope, Time dulls the smart,  
And first makes slow, then stops the heart.

Wherefore to Time I will address my song.  
Time, equable and strong,  
Take thou all hopes and longings clean away—  
And yet I prithee stay :  
Forbear, for rather I would be  
Consumed, than turn to ice with thee.

---

*THE HOME ALTAR.*

WHY should we seek at all to gain  
By vigils, and in pain,  
By lonely life and empty heart,  
To set a soul apart  
Within a cloistered cell,  
For whom the precious, homely hearth would serve as  
well ?

There, with the early breaking morn,  
Ere quite the day is born,  
The lustral waters flow serene,  
And each again grows clean ;  
From sleep, as from a tomb,  
Born to another day of joy, and hope, and doom.

There through the sweet and toilsome day,  
To labour is to pray ;  
There love with kindly beaming eyes  
Prepares the sacrifice ;  
And voice and innocent smile  
Of childhood do our cheerful liturgies beguile.

There, at his chaste and frugal feast,  
Love sitteth as a Priest ;  
And with mild eyes and mien sedate,  
His deacons stand and wait ;  
And round the holy table  
Paten and chalice range in order serviceable.

And when ere night, the vespers said,  
Low lies each weary head,  
What giveth He who gives them sleep,  
But a brief death less deep ?  
Or what the fair dreams given  
Than ours who, daily dying, dream a happier heaven ?

Then not within a cloistered wall  
Will we expend our days ;  
But dawns that break and eves that fall  
Shall bring their dues of praise.  
This best befits a Ruler always near,  
This duteous worship mild, and reasonable fear.



---

*THE VOYAGE.*

WHO climbs the Equatorial main  
Drives on long time through mist and cloud,  
Through zones of storm, through thunders loud,  
For many a night of fear and pain.

Till one night all is clear, and lo !  
He sees with wondering, awe-struck eyes,  
In depths above, in depths below,  
Strange constellations light the skies—

New stars, more splendid and more fair,  
Yet not without a secret loss :  
He seeks in vain the Northern Bear,  
And finds instead the Southern Cross.

Yet dawns the self-same sun—the same  
The deep below the keel which lies ;  
Though this may burn with brighter flame,  
And that respond to bluer skies,

The self-same earth, the self-same sky :  
And though through clouds and tempests driven,  
The self-same seeker lifts an eye  
That sees another side of heaven.

No change in man, or earth, or aught,  
Save those strange secrets of the night ;  
Nor there, save that another thought  
Has reached them through another sight,

Which may but know one hemisphere,  
The earth's mass blotting out the blue,  
Till one day, leaving shadows here,  
It sees all heaven before its view.

---

*THE FOOD OF SONG.*

How best doth vision come  
To the poet's mind,—  
Lonely beneath the blue, unclouded dome,  
Or battling with the mighty ocean-wind ;  
In fair spring mornings, with the soaring lark,  
Or amid roaring midnight forests dark ?

Shall he attune his voice  
To sweetest song,  
When earth and sea and sky alike rejoice,  
And men are blest, and think no thought of wrong,  
In some ideal heaven, some happy isle,  
Where life is stiffened to a changeless smile ?

Or best amid the noise  
Of high designs,  
Loud onsets, shatterings, awful battle joys,  
Wherefor the loftier spirit longs and pines ;  
Or amid seething depths of leaden sea ;  
Or to loud thunders rolling dreadfully ?

Nature is less than nought  
In smile or frown,  
But for the formless, underlying thought  
Of mind and purpose greater than our own ;  
This only can these empty shows inform,  
Smiles through the calm, and animates the storm.

Nor yet the clang and rush  
Of mightier thought,  
The steeps, the snows, the gulfs, that whelm and crush  
The seeker with the treasure he has sought ;  
Too vast, too swift, too formless to inspire  
The fictive hand, or touch the lips with fire.

But rather mid the throng  
Of toiling men  
He finds the food and sustenance of song,  
Spread by hidden hands, again, and yet again,  
Where'er he goes, by crowded city street,  
He fares thro' springing fancies sad and sweet—

Some innocent baby smile ;  
A close-wound waist ;  
Fathers and children ; things of shame and guile ;  
Dim eyes, and lips at parting kissed in haste ;

The halt, the blind, the prosperous thing of ill ;  
The thief, the wanton, touch and vex him still.

Or if sometimes he turn  
With a new thrill,  
And strives to paint anew with words that burn  
The inner thought of sea, or sky, or hill :  
It is because a breath of human life  
Has touched them: joy and suffering, rest and strife.

And he sees mysteries  
Above, around,  
Fair spiritual fleeting agencies  
Haunting each foot of consecrated ground.  
And so, these fading, raises bolder eyes  
Beyond the furthest limits of the skies,

And every thought and word,  
And all things seen,  
And every passion which his heart has stirred,  
And every joy and sorrow which has been,  
And every step of life his feet have trod,  
Lead by broad stairs of glory up to God.

*THE YOUTH OF THOUGHT.*

OH happy days ! oh joyous time !

When thought was gay and man was young,  
And to a golden flow of rhyme,  
Life like a melody was sung ;

When, in the springtime of the earth,  
The cloud-capt hill, the dewy grove,  
Clear lake and rippling stream gave birth  
To shy Divinities of love ;

When often to the jovial feast  
Of love or wine the people came,  
And Nature was the only priest  
And Youth and Pleasure knew not shame.

Nor darker shape of wrong or ill  
The fearful fancy might inspire,  
Than vine-crowned on some shady hill,  
The Satyr nursing quaint desire.

And if some blooming youth or maid  
In depths of wood or stream were lost,  
Some love-lorn Deity, 'twas said,  
The blissful truant's path had crossed.

Sweet time of fancy, giving place  
To times of thinking scarce less blest,  
When Wisdom wore a smiling face,  
And Knowledge was like Fancy drest,

And Art with Language lived ingrown,  
The cunning hand and golden tongue ;  
By this the form Divine was shown,  
By that its deathless praises sung.

When in cool temples fair and white,  
By purple sea, or myrtle shade,  
The gods took shape to mortal sight,  
By their own creatures' hands re-made.

And daily, mid the cheerful noise  
Of wrestling, or the panting race—  
Through the clear laughter of the boys,  
And tender forms of youthful grace—

Grave sages walked in high debate  
    Beneath the laurel grove, and sought  
To solve the mysteries of Fate,  
    And sound the lowest deeps of Thought ;

Nor knew that they, as those indeed,  
    Were naked, taking fair for right ;  
With beauty only for all creed,  
    Yet not without some heaven-sent light.

Now preaching clear the deathless soul ;  
    Now winging love from sloughs of shame ;  
And oft from earthly vapours foul,  
    Soaring aloft with tongues of flame.

Knew they no inward voice to vex  
    The careless joyance of their way—  
No pointing finger stern, which checks  
    The sad transgressor of to-day ?

Fair dream, if any dream be fair,  
    Which knows no fuller life than thine ;  
Which only moves through earthly air,  
    And builds on shadows half divine ;



How art thou fled ! For us no more  
Dryad or Satyr haunts the grove ;  
No Nereid sports upon the shore,  
Nor with wreathed horn the Tritons rove ;

Who breathe a fuller, graver air,  
Long since to manhood's stature grown ;  
Who leave our childhood's fancies fair,  
For pains and pleasures of our own.

For us no more the young vine climbs,  
Its gadding tendrils flinging down ;  
Who move in sadder, wiser times,  
Whose thorns are woven for a crown.

The lily and the passion-flower  
Preach a new tale of gain and loss,  
And in the wood-nymph's closest bower  
The springing branches form the cross.

“ A great hope traversing the earth,”  
Has taken all the young world's bloom,  
And for the joy and flush of birth,  
Has left the solemn thought of doom ;

And made the body no more divine,  
And built our Heaven no longer here ;  
And given for joyous fancies fine,  
Souls bowed with holy awe and fear.

And far beyond the suns, removed  
The godhead seen by younger eyes,  
Far from the people once beloved,  
And girt by dreadful mysteries.

Fulfilled with thoughts, more fair and dear  
Than all the lighter joys of yore,  
Immeasurable hopes brought near,  
And Heaven laid open more and more.

But not with love and peace alone  
Time came, which older joys could take ;  
But with fierce brand and hopeless groan,  
Red war, the dungeon, and the stake ;

And lives by Heaven too much opprest,  
And cloisters dim with tears and sighs,  
And young hearts withered in the breast,  
And fasts and stripes and agonies.

---

And for Apollo breathing strength,  
And Aphrodité warm with life ;  
A tortured Martyr come at length,  
To the last pang of lifelong strife.

While round us daily move no more  
Those perfect forms of youthful grace,  
No more men worship as before  
The rounded limb, the clear-cut face.

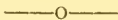
Who see the dwarfed mechanic creep,  
With hollow cheek, and lungs that bleed,  
Or the swart savage fathoms deep,  
Who comes to air, to sleep, and breed.

Aye, but by loom, or forge, or mine,  
Or squalid hut, there breaks for these  
Hope more immense, awe more divine  
Than ever dawned on Sokrates.

While if we seek to live again  
In careless lives the pagan charm,  
We only prove a life long pain,  
For that clear conscience void of harm.

For in the manhood of God's days  
We live, and not in careless youth ;  
The essence more than form we praise,  
And Beauty moves us less than Truth.

From youth to age ; till cycles hence  
Another and a higher spring,  
And with a truer innocence,  
Again the world shall think and sing.



*SONG.*

I WOULD thou might'st not vex me with thine eyes,  
Thou fair Ideal Beauty, nor would'st shame  
All lower thoughts and visions as they rise,  
As in mid-noon a flame.

For now thy presence leaves no prospect fair,  
Nor joy in act, nor charm in any maid,  
Nor end to be desired, for which men dare,  
Thou making me afraid.

Because life seems through thee a thing too great  
To spend on these, which else might grow to thee ;  
So that fast bound, I idly hesitate :  
I prithee set me free ;

Or, hold me, if thou wilt, but come not near,  
Let me pursue thee still in ghostly grace ;  
Far off let me pursue thee, for I fear  
To faint before thy face.

*AT CHAMBERS.*

To the chamber, where now uncaring  
I sit apart from the strife,  
While the fool and the knave are sharing  
The pleasures and profits of life,

There came a faint knock at the door,  
Not long since on a terrible day;  
One faint little knock, and no more;  
And I brushed the loose papers away.

And as no one made answer, I rose,  
With quick step and impatience of look,  
And a glance of the eye which froze,  
And a ready voice of rebuke.

But when the door opened, behold!  
A mother, low-voiced and mild,  
Whose thin shawl and weak arms enfold  
A pale little two-year-old child.

What brought her there? Would I relieve her?

Was all the poor mother could say ;  
For her child, scarce recovered from fever,  
Left the hospital only that day.

Pale, indeed, was the child ; yet so cheerful,  
That, seeing me wonder, she said,  
Of doubt and repulse, grown fearful,  
“ Please look at his dear little head ; ”

And snatched off the little bonnet,  
And so in a moment laid bare  
A shorn little head, and upon it  
No trace of the newly-come hair.

When, seeing the stranger's eye  
Grow soft, with an innocent guile  
The child looked up, shrinking and shy,  
With the ghost of a baby smile.

Poor child ! I thought, so soon come  
To the knowledge of lives oppressed,  
To whom poverty comes with home,  
And sickness brings food and rest :

Who art launched forth, a frail little boat,  
In the midst of life's turbulent sea,  
To be sunk, it may be, or to float  
On great waves that care nothing for thee.

What awaits thee? An early peace  
In the depth of a little grave,  
Or, despite all thy ills to increase,  
Through some dark chance, mighty to save ;

Till in stalwart manhood you meet  
The strong man, who regards you to-day,  
Crawling slowly along the street,  
In old age withered and gray?

Who knows? But the thoughts I have told  
In one instant flashed through my brain,  
As the poor mother, careful of cold,  
Clasped her infant to her again.

And I, if I searched for my purse,  
Was I selfish, say you, and wrong?  
Surely silver is wasted worse  
Than in earning the right to a song.



*EVENSONG.*

THE hymns and the prayers were done, and the village  
church was still,  
As I lay in a waking dream in the churchyard upon the  
hill.

The graves were all around, and the dark yews over my  
head,  
And below me the winding stream and the exquisite  
valley were spread.

The sun was sloping down with a glory of dying rays,  
And the hills were bathed in gold, and the woods were  
vocal with praise.

But from the deep set valley there rose a vapour of grey,  
And the sweet day sank, and the glory waxed fainter and  
faded away.

Then there came, like a chilling wind, a cold, low  
whisper of doubt,  
Which silenced the echo of hymns, and blotted the  
glories out.

And I wrestled with powers unseen, and strove with a  
Teacher divine,  
Like Jacob who strove with the angel, and found with  
the dawn a sign.

\* \* \* \*

For I thought of the words they sing: It is He that  
hath made us indeed ;  
And my thought flew back to the fathers of thought and  
their atheist creed—

How atom with atom at first fortuitously combined,  
Formed all, from the worlds without to the innermost  
worlds of mind ;

And I thought : What, if this be true, and no Maker  
there is indeed,  
And God is the symbol alone of a feeble and worn-out  
creed ;

And from uncreate atoms, impelled by a blind chance  
driving on free,  
Grew together the primal forms of all essences that be !

Then a voice : If they were, indeed, they were separate  
one from one

By a gulph as broad as yawns in space betwixt sun and  
sun—

Self-centred and self-contained, disenviioned and isolate;  
Drawn together by a hidden love, torn apart by a hidden  
hate.

What power was this—chance, will you say? But chance,  
what else can it mean  
Than the hidden Cause of things by human reason  
unseen?

Chance ! Then Chance were a name for God, or each  
atom bearing a soul  
Indivisible, like with like, part and whole of the Infinite  
Whole.

Were God, as the Pantheist taught, God in earth, and in  
sky, and in air,  
God through every thought and thing, and made manifest  
everywhere ;

The spring and movement of things—the stir, the  
breathing of breath,  
Without which all things were quenched in the calm  
of an infinite death ;

Or, if within each there lay some germ of an unborn  
power,  
God planted it first, God quickened, God raised it from  
seed to flower.

Though beneath the weird cosmical force, which we  
wield and yet cannot name,  
From the germ or the rock we draw out low gleams of  
life's faintest flame ;

Though we lose the will that commands, and the muscles  
that wait and serve,  
In some haze of a self-set spring of the molecules of  
nerve ;

Though we sink all spirit in matter, and let the Theo-  
gonies die,  
Life and death are ; thinker and thought ; outward,  
inward ; I, and not I ;

And the I is the Giver of life, and without it the matter  
must die.

\* \* \* \* \*

Then I ceased for a while from thought, as I lay on the  
long green grass,  
Hearing echoes of hymns anew, and letting the moments  
pass.

The evening was mounting upward ; the sunbeams had  
left the hill ;  
But the dying daylight lingered, and all the valley was  
still.

\* \* \* \* \*

Then I said : But if God there be, how shall man by his  
thinking find,  
Who is only a finite creature, the depths of the Infinite  
Mind—

Who sounds with a tiny plummet, who scans with a  
purbblind eye,  
The depths of that fathomless ocean, the wastes of that  
limitless sky?

Shall we bow to a fetish, a symbol, which maybe neither  
sees nor hears ;

Or, seeing and hearing indeed, takes no thought for our  
hopes or fears ;

Who is dumb, though we long for a word ; who is deaf,  
though his children cry ;

Who is Master, yet bears with evil—Lord, and lets all  
precious things die ?

Or if in despair we turn from the godless and meaningless  
plan,

What do we, but make for ourselves a God in the image  
of man—

A creature of love and hate, a creature who makes for  
good,

But barred by an evil master from working the things  
that he would ?

If he be not a reflex image, we may not know him at all ;  
If he be, we are God ourselves—to ourselves we shall  
stand or fall.

---

Then the voice : But what folly is this ! Cannot God  
indeed be known,  
If we know not the hidden essence that forms Him and  
builds his throne ?

Is all our knowledge nought, of sea, and of sky, and of  
star,  
Till we know them, not as they seem to our thinking, but  
as they are ?

We who build the whole fabric of knowledge on vague  
abstractions sublime ;  
We who whirl through an infinite space, and live in an  
infinite time ;

We who prate of Motion and Force, not knowing that  
on either side  
Black gulphs unavoidable yawn, dark riddles our thought  
deride ;

Shall we hold our science as nought of all things of  
earth, because  
We know but the seemings and shows, the relations, and  
not the cause—

Not only as he who admires the rainbow and cloud of  
gold,

Knows that 'tis but a form of vapour his wondering eyes  
behold ;

But as he who sees and knows, and knowing would fain  
ignore

What he knows since the essence of things is hid, and he  
knows not more—

Or who would not love his love, or walk hand in hand  
with his friend,

Since he sees not the roots of the tree from whose  
branches life's blossoms depend ?

Or how should the sight we see, any more than the sound  
we hear,

Be a thing which exists for our thought, apart from the  
eye or the ear ;

Is not every atom of dust, which compacted we call the  
earth,

A miracle baffling our thought with insoluble wonders of  
birth ?



And know we not, indeed, that the matter which men  
have taught,  
Is itself an essence unseen and untouched—but by spirit  
and thought?

Tush ! It is but a brainsick dream. What was it that  
taught us the laws  
Which stand as a bar between us and the thought of the  
Infinite Cause?

Is he infinite, out of relation, and absolute, past finding  
out?  
Reach we not an antinomy here? feel we here no striving  
of doubt?

How, then, shall the finite define the bounds of the  
infinite plan,  
This is finite, and infinite this : here is Deity, here is  
man.

If our judgment be relative only, how then shall our  
brain transcend  
The limits of relative thought grown too eager to  
comprehend?

For he passes the bounds of relation, if any there be  
who can

Distinguish the absolute God from the relative in man :

He has bridged the gulph ; he has leaped o'er the bound ;  
he has seen with his eyes

For a moment the land unseen, that beyond the mountain  
peaks lies.

Nay ! we see but a part of God, since we gaze with a  
finite sight ;

And yet not Darkness is He, but a blinding splendour of  
light.

Do we shrink from this light, and let our dazzled eyeballs  
fall ?

Nay ! a God fully known or utterly dark, were not God  
at all.

Though we hold not that in some sphere which our  
thought may never conceive,

There comes not a time when to know may be all, and  
not to believe ;

Nor yet that the right which we love, and the wrong  
which we hate to-day,  
May not show as reversed, or as one, when the finite has  
passed away ;

God we know in our image indeed, since we are in the  
image of Him,  
Of His splendour a faint low gleam, of His glory a reflex  
dim.

Bowing not to the all unknown, nor to that which is  
searched out quite ;  
But to That which is known, yet unknown—to the  
darkness that comes of light,  
To the contact of God with man, to the struggle and  
triumph of right.

\* \* \* \* \*

Then I ceased for a while from thought, as I lay on the  
long green grass,  
Hearing echoes of hymns grown nearer, and letting the  
moments pass.

Exult, oh dust and ashes ! the low voices seemed to say ;  
And then came a sudden hush, and the jubilation faded  
away.

The evening was dying now, and the moon-rise was on  
the hill,  
And the soft light touched the river, and all the valley  
was still.

\* \* \* \* \*

Then I thought : But if God there be, and our thought  
may reach Him indeed,  
How should this bare knowledge alone stand in lieu of a  
fuller creed ?

If He be and is good, as they say, how yet can our judg-  
ment approve,  
'Mid the rule of His iron laws, the place of His infinite  
love ?

The rocks are built up of death, earth and sea teem  
with ravin and wrong ;  
The sole law in Nature we learn, is the law that  
strengthens the strong.

Through countless ages of time, the Lord has withdrawn  
Him apart  
From all the world He has made, save the world of the  
human heart.

Without and within all is pain, from the cry of the child at  
birth,  
To its parting sigh in age, when it looks for a happier  
earth.

Should you plead that God's order goes forth with a  
measured footstep sublime,  
Know you not that you thrust Him back thus to the first  
beginnings of time,—

That a spark, a moment, a flash, and His work was over  
and done ;  
And the worlds were sent forth for ever, each circling  
around its sun.

Bearing with it all secrets of being, all potencies  
undefined,  
All forms and changes of matter, all growths and achieve-  
ments of mind.

What is there for our worship in this, and should not our  
reason say,

He is, and made us indeed, but hides Him too far away?

Though He lives, yet is He as one dead; and we, who  
would prostrate fall

Before the light of His Presence, we see not nor know  
Him at all.

Then the voice: Oh folly of doubt! what is time that  
we deem so far,

What else but a multiple vast of the little lives that are?

He who lives for the fifty years, which scarce rear thought  
to its prime,

Already a measure has lived of a thousand years of time.

Twice this, and Christ spoke not yet, and from this what  
a span appears,

The space till our thought is lost in the mists of a million  
years!

A thousand millions of years—we have leapt with a  
thought, with a word;

To the time when no flutter of life 'neath the shield of the  
trilobite stirred.

All time is too brief for our thought, and yet we would  
bring God nigh,  
Till He worked in His creature's sight, man standing  
undazzled by.

Such a God were not God indeed ; nor, if He should  
change at all,  
Should we hold, as we hold Him now, the God of both  
great and small.

How know we the great things from small ? how mark we  
the adequate cause,  
Which might make the Creator impede the march of His  
perfect laws,—

We, who know but a part, not the whole ? Or were it a  
fitting thought  
He should stoop in our sight to amend the errors His  
hand had wrought,

So His laws were not perfect at all ? or should he amend  
them indeed,  
How supply by a fitful caprice the want of a normal  
creed ?

All life is a mode of force, and all force that is force  
must move;

'Tis a friction of Outward and Inward, a contrast of  
Hatred and Love.

Joy and Grief, Right and Wrong, Life and Death, Finite,  
Infinite, Matter and Will,  
These are the twin wheels of the Chariot of Life, which  
without them stood still.

Would you seek in an order reversed and amended a  
Hand divine?

Nay, the Wonder of wonders lies in unchangeable  
design.

Should God break His law as He might; should He  
stoop from His infinite skies

To redress that which seems to us wrong, to raise up the  
life that dies;

Should He save from His wolf His lamb, from His tiger  
His innocent child;

Should He quench the fierce flames as they burn, or the  
great waves clamouring wild,



I think a great cry would go up from an orderless  
Universe,  
And all the fair fabric of things would wither, as under a  
curse.

'Tis the God of the savage, is this. What do we who rise  
by degrees  
To the gift of the mind that perceives, and the gift of the  
eye that sees?

Do not all our natures tend to a law of unbending rule,  
Till equity comes but to mend the law that was made by  
the fool?

Who shows highest?—the child or the savage, whose  
smiles change to rage or to tears?

Or the statesman moving, unmoved, through a nation's  
desires and fears?

Or the pilgrim whose eyes look onward, as if to a  
distant home,

Never turning aside from his path, whatever allurements  
may come?

All Higher is more Unmoved ; and the more unbroken  
the law,

The more sure does the Giver show to the eyes of a  
wondering awe.

Nor is it with all of truth that they make their voices  
complain,

Who weary our thought with tales of a constant ruin and  
pain.

It is but a brain-sick dream that would gloat o'er the  
hopeless bed,

Or the wreck, or the crash, or the fight, with their tales of  
the dying and dead.

Pain comes ; hopeless pain, God knows and we know,  
again and again ;

But even pain has its intervals blest, when 'tis heaven to  
be free from pain.

And I think that the wretch who lies pressed by a load of  
incurable ill,

With a grave pity pities himself, but would choose to have  
lived to it still ;

And, as he whom the tiger bears in his jaws to his blood-  
stained den

Feels no pain nor fear, but a wonder what comes in the  
wonderful "Then,"

He pities himself and yet knows, as he casts up life's  
chequered sum,

It were best on the whole to have lived, whatever calamity  
come.

And the earth is full of joy. Every blade of grass that  
springs ;

Every cool worm that crawls content as the eagle on  
soaring wings ;

Every summer day instinct with life ; every dawn when  
from waking bird

And morning hum of the bee, a chorus of praise is  
heard ;

Every gnat that sports in the sun for his little life of a  
day ;

Every flower that opens its cup to the dews of a per-  
fumed May ;

Every child that wakes with a smile, and sings to the  
ceiling at dawn ;

Every bosom which knows a new hope stir beneath its  
virginal lawn ;

Every young soul, ardent and high, rushing forth into life's  
hot fight ;

Every home of happy content, lit by love's own mystical  
light ;

Every worker who works till the evening, and takes before  
night his wage,

Be his work a furrow straight-drawn, or the joy of a  
bettered age ;

Every thinker who, standing aloof from the throng, finds  
a high delight

In striking with voice or with pen a stroke for the  
triumph of right ;—

All these know that life is sweet ; all these, with a  
consonant voice,

Read the legend of Time with a smile, and that which  
they read is, “ Rejoice ! ”

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Then again I ceased from thought, as I lay on the long  
green grass,  
Hearing hymns which grew fuller and fuller, and letting  
the moments pass.

Exult, oh dust and ashes ! exult and rejoice ! they said,  
For blessed are they who live, and blessed are they who  
are dead.

Then again they ceased and were still, and my thought  
began once more,  
But touched with a silvery gleam of hopes that were  
hidden before.

The moon had climbed up in the sky, far above the pines  
on the hill,  
And the river ran molten silver, and all the valley was  
still.

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Then I said : But if God there be, who made us indeed  
and is good,  
What guide has He left for our feet to walk in the ways  
that He would ?

For though He should speak indeed, yet, as soon as His  
voice grew dumb,  
It were only through human speech that the message it  
bore might come,

Sunk to levels of human thought, and always marred  
and confined  
By the chain of a halting tongue, and the curse of a  
finite mind ;

So that he who would learn, indeed, what precepts His  
will has taught,  
Must dim with a secular learning the brightness his soul  
has sought.

Who can tell how those scattered leaves through gradual  
ages grew,  
Adding chaff and dust from the world to the accents  
simple and true ?

If one might from the seer's wild visions, or stories of  
fraud and blood,  
Or lore of the world-worn Sultan, discern the sure voice  
of good,

Such a mind were a God to itself; or if you should  
answer, For each

God has set a sure mentor within, with power to convince  
and teach ;

Yet it speaks with a changeful voice, which alters with  
race and clime,

Nay, even in the self-same lands is changed with the  
changes of time ;

So that 'twixt the old Europe of story and that which we  
know to-day,

Yawns a gulph, as wide almost as parts us from far  
Cathay ;

What power has such voice to help us? Or if we should  
turn instead

To the precious dissonant pages, which keep what the  
Teacher said ;

How reduce them to one indeed, or how seek in vain to  
ignore

The forgotten teachers who taught His counsels of mercy  
before ?

Not "an eye for an eye" alone, was the rule which they  
loved to teach,  
But Mercy, and Pity, and Love, though they spoke  
with a halting speech,

And He spake with the tongue of those who had spoken  
and then were dumb,  
And clothed in the words of the Law, which He loved,  
would his precepts come ;

Nor always perfect was He in thought, in act, or in  
word,  
Who withered in haste the fig-tree, and drove to destruc-  
tion the herd ;

Who was angry sometimes, and spoke with quick words  
and fiery hate ;  
Who offered too-perfect counsels, and took little thought  
for the State.

Other teachers have drawn more millions, who follow  
more faithful than we ;  
Other teachers have taught a rule as stern and unselfish  
as He.



If we shrink from the Caliph fierce, who carved out a  
faith with his sword,

What say we of the pilgrim who sways the old East with  
his gentle word?

Or what of the sage whose vague words, over populous  
wastes of earth,

Have led millions of fettered feet to the grave from the  
day of birth?

Or how can we part indeed, the show, the portent, the  
sign,

From the simple words which glow with the light of a  
teaching Divine?

And if careless of these, as of growths which spring up  
and bear fruit and fall,

Yet how shall our thought accept the crowning wonder  
of all?

Yet if this we reject, wherein doth our faith and assur-  
ance lie?

What is it to us that God lives, we who live for a little  
and die;

Or why were it not more wise to live as the beasts of  
to-day,  
Taking life, while it lasts, as a gift, and secure of the  
future as they?

Then the voice : Oh, disease of doubt ! now I seem to  
hold you indeed,  
Keeping fast in my grasp at length the sum of your  
dreary creed.

How else should man prove God's will, than through  
methods of human thought?  
How else than through human words shall he gather the  
things that he ought?

If the Lord should speak day by day from Sinai, 'mid  
clouds and fire,  
Should we hear 'mid those thunders loud the still voices  
which now inspire?

Would not either that awful sound, like that vivid and  
scorching blaze,  
Confuse our struggling thought, and our tottering foot-  
steps amaze?

Or, if it should sound so clear that to hear were to obey  
indeed,

'Twere a thing of dry knowledge alone, not one of a  
faithful creed ;

No lantern for erring feet, but a glare on a white, straight  
road,

Where life struggled its weary day, to sink before night  
with its load ;

Where the blinded soul might long for the shade of a  
cloud of doubt,

And yearn for dead silence, to blot that terrible utterance  
out.

Yet God is not silent indeed ; not seldom from every  
page—

From the lisping story of eld to the seer with his noble  
rage ;

From the simple life divine, with its accents gentle and  
true,

To the thinker who formed by his learning and watered  
the faith as it grew :

All are fired by the Spirit of God. Nor true is the doubt  
you teach,  
That God speaks not to all men the same, but differs  
'twixt each and each.

Each differs from each a little, with difference of race  
and of clime ;  
Each is changed, but not transformed, with the onward  
process of time ;

Each nation, each age, has its laws, whereto it shall  
stand or fall,  
But built on a wider Law, which is under and over them  
all.

Nor doubt we that from Western wilds to the long-sealed  
isles of Japan,  
There runs the unbroken realm of a Law that is common  
to man.

Not as ours shows the law they obey, and yet it is one  
and the same,  
Though it comes in a varying shape, and is named by  
another name.

Not so shall your doubt prevail; nor if any should dream  
to-day,

By praise of Jew or of Greek, to dissolve His glory  
away,

Can they hold that God left His world with no gleam of  
glory from Him,

No light clouds edged with splendour, no radiance of  
Godhead dim.

Others were before Christ had come. Oh ! dear dead  
Teacher, whose word,

Long before the sweet words on the Hill, young hearts  
had quickened and stirred ;

Who spak'st of the soul and the life ; with limbs chilled  
by the rising death,

Yielding up to thy faith, with a smile, the last gasp of  
thy earthly breath ;—

And thou, oh golden-mouthed sage, who with brilliance  
of thought as of tongue,

Didst sing of thy Commonwealth fair, the noblest of  
epics unsung ;

In whose pages thy Master's words shine forth, sublimed  
and refined .

In the music of perfect language, inspired by a faithful  
mind ;—

And ye seers of Israel and doctors, whose breath was  
breathed forth to move

The dry dead bones of the Law with the life of a larger  
love ;—

Or thou, great Saint of the East, in whose footsteps the  
millions have trod

Till from life, like an innocent dream, they past and were  
lost in God ;—

And thou, quaint teacher of old, whose dead words,  
though all life be gone,

Through the peaceful Atheist realms keep the millions  
labouring on ;—

Shall I hold that ye, as the rest, spake no echo of things  
divine,

That no gleam of a clouded sun through the mists of  
your teaching may shine ?

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Nay; such thoughts were to doubt of God. Yet, strange  
it is and yet sure,  
No teacher of old was full of mercy as ours, or pure.

'Twixt the love that He taught, and the Greek with his  
nameless, terrible love,  
Yawns a gulph as wide as parts, hell beneath and heaven  
above;

'Twixt His rule of a Higher Mercy and that which the  
Rabbi taught,  
Lies the gulph between glowing Act and barren ashes of  
Thought.

For the pure thought smirched and fouled, or buried in  
pedant lore,  
He brought a sweet Reason of Force, such as man knew  
never before.

What to us are the men of the East, though they preach  
their own Gospel indeed?  
We are men of the West, and shall stand or fall by a  
Western creed.

Though we see in those Scriptures antique, faint flames of  
Diviner fire,  
Who would change to Buddha from Christ, as a change,  
from lower to higher ?

Nay ! He is our Teacher indeed. Little boots it to-day  
to seek  
To arraign, with a laboured learning, the words that men  
heard Him speak ;

To cavil, to carp, to strive, through the mists of an age-  
long haze,  
To dim to a common light the star which could once  
amaze ;

To fix by some pigmy canon, too short for the tale of  
to-day,  
The facts of a brief life, fled eighteen centuries away ;

To mark by a guess, and to spurn, as born of a later age,  
The proofs which, whenever writ, bear God's finger on  
every page ;



Or to sneer at the wonders they saw Him work, or  
believed they saw ;

We who know that unbending sequence is only a phase  
of law,

No wonder which God might do if it rested on witness of  
men,

Would turn to it our thought of to-day as it turned the  
multitudes then.

Nor proved would avail a whit if the teaching itself were  
not pure ;

Nor if it were pure as His would make it one whit more  
sure.

And for the great Wonder of all. If any there be who  
fears

That the spark of God in his breast may be quenched in  
a few short years ;

Who feels his faith's fire blaze up more clear than it  
burnt before,

By the thought of the empty tomb and the stone rolled  
back from the door :

For him was the miracle done. If no proof makes  
clearer to me

Than His word to my inner sense, the Higher life that  
shall be;

If no Force that has once leapt forth can ever decline  
and fall,

From the dead forces stirring the worlds, to the Life-force  
which dominates all ;

But the sum of life is the same, and shall be when the  
world is done,

As it was when its first faint spark was stirred by the kiss  
of the sun ;—

If I feel a sure knowledge within, which shall never be  
blotted out,

A Longing, a Faith, a Conviction too strong for a  
Whisper of Doubt

That my life shall be hid with a Lord, who shall do the  
thing that is best—

To be purged, it may be, long time, or taken at once to  
rest,—

To live, it may be, myself ; from all else, individual, sole,  
Or blended with other lives, or sunk in the Infinite  
whole—

(Though I doubt not that that which is I may endure in  
the ages to be,  
Since I know not what bars hold apart the Not-Me  
and the mystical Me ;—)

How else than thro' Him do I grasp the faith that for  
Greek and Jew  
Was hidden, or but dimly seen, which nor Moses nor  
Socrates knew ?

Ay ! He is our Teacher indeed. He is risen, and we  
shall rise ;  
But if only as we He rose, not the less He lives in the  
skies.

And if those who proclaim Him to-day in the dim gray  
lands of the East,  
Prove him not by portent or sign, not by trick or secret  
of priest ;

But for old cosmogonies dead, and faint precepts too  
weak for our need,  
Offer God brought nearer to man in a living and glowing  
creed.

The pure teaching, the passionate love, taking thought  
for the humble and weak,  
The pitiful scorn of wrong which His Scriptures every-  
where speak,

Not writ for the sage in his cell, but preached 'mid the  
turmoil and strife,  
And touched with a living brand from the fire of the  
Altar of Life.

So, of all the wonders they tell, no wonder our hearts  
has stirred  
Like the Wonder which lives with us still in a living and  
breathing Word.

More than portents, more than all splendours of rank  
loyal hearts devise,  
More than visions of heavenly forms caught up and lost  
in the skies,

This the crowning miracle shows, before which we must  
prostrate fall ;

For this is the living voice of the Lord and Giver of all.

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Then I ceased again from thought, as I lay on the long  
green grass,

Thrilled through by a music of hymns, and letting the  
moments pass.

Exult and rejoice ! they sang in high unison, now com-  
bined

Which were warring voices before, the voices of heart  
and mind.

The earth was flooded with light, over valley and river  
and hill,

And this is the hymn which I heard them sing, while the  
world lay still :

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Exult, oh dust and ashes ! Rejoice, all ye that are  
dead !

For ye live too who lie beneath as we live who walk  
overhead.

As God lives, so ye are living ; ye are living and moving  
to-day,  
Not as they live who breathe and move, yet living and  
conscious as they.

And ye too, oh living, exult. Young and old, exult and  
rejoice ;  
For the Lord of the quick and the dead lives still : we  
have heard His voice.

We have heard His voice, and we hear it sound wider and  
more increased,  
To the sunset plains of the West from the peaks of the  
furthest East.

For the quick and the dead, it was given ; for them it is  
sounding still,  
And no pause of silence shall break the clear voice of  
the Infinite Will.

Not only through Christ long since, and the teachers of  
ages gone,  
But to-day He speaks, day by day, to those who are  
toiling on ;

More clear perhaps then to the ear, and with nigher  
voice and more plain,  
But still the same Teacher Divine, speaking to us again  
and again.

For I like not his creed, if any there be, who shall dare  
to hold  
That God comes to us only at times far away in the  
centuries old.

Not so ; but He dwells with us still ; and maybe, though  
I know not indeed,  
He will send us a Christ again, with a fuller and perfecter  
creed— .

A Christ who shall speak to all men, East and West, and  
North and South,  
Till the whole world shall hear and believe the gracious  
words of His mouth.

When knowledge has pierced through the wastes, chaining  
earth together and sea,  
And the bars of to-day are lost in the union of all that  
shall be ;

And the brotherhood that He loved is more than a  
saintly thought,

And the wars and the strifes which we mourn are lost in  
the peace He taught ;

Then Christ coming shall make all things new. Or it  
may be that ages of pain

Shall quench the dim light of to-day, bringing back the  
thick darkness again.

And then, slow as the tide which flows on though each  
wave may seem to recede,

Man advances again and again to the Rock of a higher  
creed.

Or it may be no teacher shall come down again with  
God in his face,

But the light which before was reflected from One shall  
shine on the race.

And as this wide earth grows smaller, and men to men  
nearer draw,

There may spring from the root of the race the flower of  
a nobler law,



Growing fairer, and still more fair ; or maybe, through  
long ages of time,  
Man shall rise up from type to type, to the strength of  
an essence sublime,

Removed as far in knowledge, in length of life, and in  
good,  
From us as we from the mollusc which gasped in the  
first warm flood,—

A creature so wise and so high that he scorns all allure-  
ment of ill,  
Marching on through an ordered life in the strength of a  
steadfast will.

Who knows? But, however it be, we live, and shall live  
indeed,  
In ourselves or in others to come. What more doth our  
longing need?

Hid with God, or on earth, we shall see, burning brighter  
and yet more bright,  
The sphere of humanity move throughout time on its  
pathway of light ;

Circling round with a narrower orbit, as age upon age  
fleets away,  
The centre of Force and of Being, the Fountain of Light  
and of Day,

Till, nearer drawn, and more near, at last it shall merge  
and fall.

In its source; man is swallowed in God, the Part is lost  
in the All;

One more world is recalled to rest, one more star adds its  
fire to the sun,  
One light less wanders thro' space, and the story of man  
is done.

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'Then slowly I rose to go from my place on the long green  
grass,  
Where so long I had lain in deep thought, and letting  
the moments pass.

A great light was flooding all the plains of the earth and  
the sky,  
The low church and the deep-sunk vale, and the place  
where one day I shall lie,

The fresh graves of those we have lost, the dark yews  
with their reverend gloom,  
And the green wave which only marks the place of the  
nameless tomb ;

And thro' all the clear spaces above—oh wonder ! oh  
glory of Light !—  
Came forth myriads on myriads of worlds, the shining  
host of the night,—

The vast forces and fires that know the same sun and  
centre as we ;  
The faint planets which roll in vast orbits round suns we  
shall never see ;

The rays which had sped from the first, with the awful  
swiftness of light,  
To reach only then, it might be, the confines of mortal  
sight.

Oh, wonder of cosmical order ! oh, Maker and Ruler  
of all,  
Before whose Infinite greatness in silence we worship  
and fall !

Could I doubt that the Will which keeps this great uni-  
verse steadfast and sure  
Can be less than His creatures thought, full of goodness,  
pitiful, pure ?

Could I dream that the Power which keeps those great  
suns circling around,  
Takes no thought for the humblest life which flutters and  
falls to the ground ?

Oh, Faith ! thou art higher than all. Then I turned  
from the glories above,  
And from every casement new-lit there shone a soft  
radiance of love.

Young mothers were teaching their children to fold little  
hands in prayer ;  
Strong fathers were resting from toil, 'mid the hush of the  
Sabbath air.

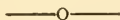
Peasant lovers strolled thro' the lanes, shy and diffident,  
each with each,  
Yet knit by some subtle union too fine for their halting  
speech.

Humble lives, to low thought, and low ; but linked, to  
the thinker's eye,  
By a bond that is stronger than death, with the lights of  
the farthest sky.

Here as there, the great drama of life rolled on, and a  
jubilant voice  
Thrilled through me ineffable, vast, and bade me exult  
and rejoice.

Exult and rejoice, oh soul ! sang my being to a  
mystical hymn  
As I passed by the cool bright wolds, as I threaded my  
pinewoods dim ;

Rejoice and be sure ! as I passed to my fair home  
under the hill,  
Wrapt round with a happy content,—and the world  
and my soul were still.



*SONG.*

BEAM on me, fair Ideal, beam on me !

Too long thou hast concealed thee in a cloud ;  
Mine is no vision strong to pierce to thee,  
Nor voice complaining loud,  
Whereby thou mightest find thy dear, and come  
To thine own heart, and long expecting home.

Too long thou dost withdraw thee from mine eyes ;  
Too long thou lingerest. Ah, truant sweet !  
Dost thou no reckoning take of all my sighs,  
While Time with flying feet  
Speeds onward, till the westering sun sinks low—  
With cruel feet so swift and yet so slow ?

Time was I thought that thou wouldst come a maid  
White-armed, with deep blue eyes and sunny head ;  
But, ah ! too long the lovely vision stayed.  
And then, when this was fled,  
Fame, with blown clarion clear, and wide-spread wings,  
Fame, crown and summit of created things.

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And then in guise of Truth, when this grew faint,  
Truth in Belief and Act, and Life and Thought,  
White-robed and virginal, a pure cold saint,  
Thou camest a while, long sought ;  
But only in glimpses camest thou, so I  
Watch wearily until thou passest by.

I wait, I watch, I hunger, though I know  
Thou wilt not come at all who stay'st so long.  
My hope has lost its strength, my heart its glow ;  
I grow too cold for song :  
Long since I might have sung, hadst thou come then,  
A song to echo through the souls of men.

Yet, since 'tis better far to dream in sleep,  
Than wholly lose the treacheries of time,  
I hold it gain to have seen thy garments sweep  
On the far hills sublime :  
Still will I hope thy glorious face to see,—  
Beam on me, fair Ideal, beam on me !

*AT LAST.*

LET me at last be laid  
On that hillside I know which scans the vale,  
Beneath the thick yews' shade,  
For shelter when the rains and winds prevail.  
It cannot be the eye  
Is blinded when we die,  
So that we know no more at all  
The dawns increase, the evenings fall ;  
Shut up within a rotting chest of wood,  
Asleep, and careless of our children's good.

Shall I not feel the spring,  
The yearly resurrection of the earth,  
Stir thro' each sleeping thing  
With the fair throbbings and alarms of birth,  
Calling at its own hour  
On folded leaf and flower,  
Calling the lamb, the lark, the bee,  
Calling the crocus and anemone,  
Calling new lustre to the maiden's eye,  
And to the youth love and ambition high ?



Shall I no more admire  
The winding river kiss the daisied plain ?  
Nor see the dawn's cold fire  
Steal downward from the rosy hills again ?  
Nor watch the frowning cloud,  
Sublime with mutterings loud,  
Burst on the vale, nor eves of gold,  
Nor crescent moons, nor starlight cold,  
Nor the red casements glimmer on the hill  
At Yule-tides, when the frozen leas are still ?

Or should my children's tread  
Through Sabbath twilights, when the hymns are done,  
Come softly overhead,  
Shall no sweet quickening through my bosom run,  
Till all my soul exhale  
Into the primrose pale,  
And every flower which springs above  
Breathes a new perfume from my love ;  
And I shall throb, and stir, and thrill beneath  
With a pure passion stronger far than death ?

Sweet thought ! fair, gracious dream,  
Too fair and fleeting for our clearer view !

How should our reason deem  
That those dear souls, who sleep beneath the blue  
In rayless caverns dim,  
'Mid ocean monsters grim,  
Or whitening on the trackless sand,  
Or with strange corpses on each hand  
In battle-trench or city graveyard lie,  
Break not their prison-bonds till time shall die ?

Nay, 'tis not so indeed.  
With the last fluttering of the failing breath  
The clay-cold form doth breed  
A viewless essence, far too fine for death ;  
And ere one voice can mourn,  
On upward pinions borne,  
They are hidden, they are hidden, in some thin air,  
Far from corruption, far from care,  
Where through a veil they view their former scene,  
Only a little touched by what has been.

Touched but a little ; and yet,  
Conscious of every change that doth befall,  
By constant change beset,  
The creatures of this tiny whirling ball,

---

Filled with a higher being,  
Dowered with a clearer seeing,  
Risen to a vaster scheme of life,  
To wider joys and nobler strife,  
Viewing our little human hopes and fears  
As we our children's fleeting smiles and tears.

Then, whether with fire they burn  
This dwelling-house of mine when I am fled,  
And in a marble urn  
My ashes rest by my beloved dead,  
Or in the sweet cold earth  
I pass from death to birth,  
And pay kind Nature's life-long debt  
In heart's-ease and in violet—  
In charnel-yard or hidden ocean wave,  
Where'er I lie, I shall not scorn my grave.

*A MEMORIAL.*

WHITE marbles, treasures of the mine,  
Fair carvings round a jewelled cross,  
Adorn the delicate golden shrine  
Where love commemorates its loss.

Thus England strives to glorify  
One whose fine nature blended here  
The artist hand, the seeing eye,  
The high musician's subtle ear.

Around him groups each useful art  
Which gives us covering, shelter, food ;  
Which knits the nations thrust apart ;  
Which smoothes the hill, or spans the flood.

And, in the fair relief which runs  
Around the high-set basement, stand,  
Each in the noblest of her sons  
The royal arts of brain and hand.

Homer and Shakspeare, Kings of Song ;  
Mozart and Handel, Lords of Sound ;  
Phidias ; and Angelo, the strong ;  
Sweet Raphael, throned with painters round.

While, at the broad base, carven white,  
Like sentinels on either hand,  
Symbolic to the finer sight,  
The great Earth's four divisions stand.

Her strong bull, Europe seems to ride ;  
Asia, her huge obedient beast ;—  
With queens of fancy on each side ;—  
With eagle faces of the East.

Afric, with kneeling camel mild ;  
And broad-lipped Nubian, swart of hue ;  
Columbia, keen, with bison wild ;  
Indian ; and Inca of Peru.

And, canopied within the shrine,  
Gazing with contemplative eyes,  
The comely form and features fine  
Of one who was as good as wise.

Who spent what intervals were his,  
From graver duties of the State,  
Not in the silken frivolous ease  
And laboured leisure of the great:

Nor walked with those who cared for nought  
But how the careless hours to fill,  
Nor any joy of act or thought  
Nought but to game, and dance, and kill.

These drew him not, whose happy home  
Filled every thought ; who knew the love  
Of a true wife, and children come,  
His tenderness and love to move.

And rested there with Art and Song,  
Science and Thought,—a glorious quire,  
And Love, the Master-Player, strong  
To wake each separate chord with fire.

A thousand homes like his there be  
In this our happy, peaceful land;  
But none set high for all to see,  
Nor girt by watchers on each hand.

Nor yet so gracious and refined  
As is the stately life of Kings,  
Who, safe from every ruder wind,  
See Time fleet by on noiseless wings.

A Royal home ! In all the life  
Of England came not days like these ;  
Stern days of war and civil strife ;  
Soft days of sensual sloth and ease ;

All these were hers. But this had come  
Never at all, this ordered life,  
This finer and more gracious home  
Built on the hearts of man and wife,

Till this man came. Let those who know  
What perils compass round a throne,  
What fierce temptations burn and glow  
Round one who lives and breathes alone,

Think it more honour to have been  
So pure, that never slander's breath  
Touched the first subject of his Queen,  
Blameless in life, bewailed in death,

Than to have ranged in peaceful strife  
The gathered fruit of brain and hand,  
And drawn the precious arts of life  
Together from every distant land,

Till under those long aisles of glass  
Men thronged, and dreamt the end of war—  
Nor, tho' Time mocks our hopes, alas !  
Deem we since then the change so far,—

Higher than this, or to have led  
Our rugged English mind and heart  
To love the mighty Masters, dead,  
Who live in every living Art.

Or, with wise kindness, to have sought  
The seeker, who elects to take  
No other riches than his thought,  
Counting all gain for knowledge sake.

Most precious deeds, and fit to earn  
What record loving hearts devise ;  
High monument, and words that burn,  
But, more than all of them, we prize



Exceeding these as it exceeds  
The fame of warriors strong to kill ;  
Ay, even the statesman's thoughts and deeds,  
Which sway the docile nation's will.

The high example, white and pure ;  
The fair life, dutiful and mild ;  
The loving thought, which shall endure  
Beyond the love of wife and child.

Rest, happy shade ! within the shrine  
Thy Love has built, securely rest ;  
And teach, from out thy calm divine,  
Peoples and Kings what life is best.

*SONG.*

LOVE-SIGHS that are sighed and spent in vain,  
Ah ! folly, folly,  
Thou dost transmute into a precious pain,  
Sweet melancholy.  
Ah ! folly, folly,  
Ah ! fair melancholy,  
Sweeter by far thy mild remedial pain,  
Than if fierce hope should rise and throb again.

High hopes of glory sunk to nought,  
Ah ! folly, folly,  
And deep perplexities of baffled thought  
Thou healest, melancholy.  
Ah ! folly, folly,  
Ah ! sweet melancholy,  
Thou dost bear with thee a balm unsought,  
To heal the wounds of love and pride and thought.

Yet thou art a trivial cure for ill,  
Pale melancholy,  
Fitting best a feeblar brain and will,  
Ah ! folly, folly.  
Ay, sweet melancholy  
Folly art thou, folly.  
Who only may not trivial ills endure  
Will in thy pharmacy repose his cure.

Since thou shalt not heal the wounds I know,  
Pale melancholy,  
I will seek if any comfort grow  
In jovial folly,  
Ah ! folly, folly,  
Worse than melancholy,  
No other cure there is for Fortune's smart  
Than a soul self-contained, and a proud innocent heart.

*THE DIALOGUE.*

UNTO my soul I said,

“Oh, vagrant soul !

When o'er my living head

A few years roll,

Is't true that thou shalt fly

Far away into the sky,

Leaving me in my place

Alone with my disgrace ?

For thou wilt stand in the East,

The night withdrawn,

White-robed as is a priest,

At the door of dawn ;

While I within the ground,

In misery fast bound,

Shall lie, blind, deaf, and foul,

Since thou art fled, O soul.”

Then said my soul to me :

“Thy lot is best ;

For thou shalt tranquil be,

Sunk deep in rest,

While naked I shall know  
The intolerable glow  
When as, the sun, shall rise  
A fire in fiery skies.

Thou shalt lie cool and dark,  
    Forgetting all ;  
I shall float shamed and stark,  
    Till the sun fall.  
Thou shalt be earth in earth,  
Preparing for new birth ;  
While me in the heaven fierce,  
Pure glories fright and pierce."

Then said I to my soul,  
    And she to me :  
"Where'er life's current roll  
    We twain shall be,  
Part here and part not here,  
Partners in hope and fear,  
Until, our exile done,  
We meet at last in one."

*THE BIRTH OF VERSE.*

BLIND thoughts which occupy the brain,  
Dumb melodies which fill the ear,  
Dim perturbations, precious pain,  
A gleam of hope, a chill of fear,—  
These seize the poet's soul, and mould  
The ore of fancy into gold.

And first no definite thought there is  
In all that affluence of sound,  
Like those sweet formless melodies  
Piped to the listening woods around,  
By birds which never teacher had  
But love and knowledge: they are glad.

Till, when the chambers of the soul  
Are filled with inarticulate airs,  
A spirit comes which doth control  
The music, and its end prepares;  
And, with a power serene and strong,  
Shapes these wild melodies to song.

Or haply, thoughts which glow and burn  
Await long time the fitting strain,

Which, swiftly swelling, seems to turn  
The silence to a load of pain ;  
And somewhat in him seems to cry,  
“I will have utterance, or I die !”

Then of a sudden, full, complete,  
The strong strain bursting into sound,  
Words come with rhythmic rush of feet,  
Fit music girds the language round,  
And with a sweetness all unsought  
Soars up the winged embodied thought.

But howsoever they may rise,  
Fit words and music come to birth ;  
There soars an angel to the skies,  
There walks a Presence on the earth—  
A something which shall yet inspire  
Myriads of souls unborn with fire.

And when his voice is hushed and dumb,  
The flame burnt out, the glory dead,  
He feels a thrill of wonder come  
At that which his poor tongue has said ;  
And thinks of each diviner line—  
“Only the hand that wrote was mine.”

*FROM HADES.*

IN February, when the dawn was slow,  
And winds lay still, I gazed upon the fields  
Which stretched before me lifeless, and the stream  
Which laboured in the distance to the sea,  
Sullen and cold. No force of fancy took  
My thought to bloomy June, when all the land  
Was deep in crested grass, and through the dew  
The landrail brushed, and the lush banks were set  
With strawberries, and the hot noise of bees  
Lulled the bright flowers. Rather I seemed to move  
Thro' that weird land, Hellenic fancy feigned,  
Beyond the fabled river and the bark  
Of Charon ; and forthwith on every side  
Rose the thin throng of ghosts.

And first I saw

A manly hunter pace along the lea,  
His bow upon his shoulders, and his spear  
Poised idly in his hand : the face and form  
Of vigorous youth ; but in the full brown eyes  
A timorous gaze as of a hunted hart,



Brute-like, yet human still, even as the Faun  
Of old, the dumb brute passing into man,  
And dowered with double nature. As he came  
I seemed to question of his fate, and he  
Answered me thus :

“ ’Twas one hot afternoon  
That I, a hunter, wearied with my day,  
Heard my hounds baying fainter on the hills,  
Led by the flying hart ; and when the sound  
Faded and all was still, I turned to seek,  
O’ercome by heat and thirst, a little glade,  
Deep in the cool recesses of the wood,  
Where the cold crystal of a mossy pool  
Rose to the flowery marge, and gave again  
The soft green lawn where oftentimes, overspent,  
I lay upon the grass and eager bathed  
My limbs in the clear lymph.

But as I neared  
The hollow, sudden through the leaves I saw  
A throng of wood-nymphs fair, sporting undraped  
Round one, a goddess. She with timid hand  
Loosened her zone, and glancing round let fall  
Her robe from neck and bosom, pure and bright,  
(For it was Dian’s self : I saw none else)

As when she frees her from a fleece of cloud  
And swims along the deep blue sea of heaven  
On sweet June nights. Silent awhile I stood,  
Rooted with awe, and fain had turned to fly,  
But feared by careless footstep to affright  
Those chaste cold eyes. Great awe and reverence  
Held me, and fear ; then Love with passing wing  
Fanned me, and held my eyes, and checked my breath,  
Signing ' Beware ! '

So for a time I watched,  
Breathless as one a brooding nightmare holds,  
Who fleeth some great fear, yet fleeth not,  
Till the last flutter of lawn, and veil no more  
Obscured, and all the beauty of my dreams  
Assailed my sense ; but ere I raised my eyes,  
As one who fain would look and see the sun,  
The first glance dazed my brain. Only I knew  
The perfect outline flow in tender curves,  
To break in double beauties ; only a haze  
Of creamy white, dimple, and deep divine :  
And then no more. For lo ! a sudden chill,  
And such thick mist as shuts the hills at eve,  
Oppressed me gazing ; and a heaven-sent shame,  
An awe, a fear, a reverence for the unknown,

Froze all the springs of will and left me cold,  
And blinded all the longings of my eyes,  
Leaving such dim reflection still as mocks  
Him who has looked on a great light, and keeps  
On his closed eyes the image. Presently,  
Hidden as Eve hid her, 'mid the dewy groves  
Of Paradise, my fainting soul renewed  
And straight, the innocent brute within the man  
Bore on me, and with half-averted mind  
I gazed upon the secret.

As I looked

A radiance white, as beamed the frosty moon  
On the mad boy and slew him, beamed on me ;  
Made chill my pulses, checked my life and heat ;  
Transformed me, withered all my soul, and left  
My being burnt out. For lo ! the dreadful eyes  
Of Godhead met my gaze, and through the mask  
And thick disguise of sense, as through a wood,  
Pierced to my life. Then suddenly I knew  
An altered nature, touched by no desire  
For that which showed so lovely, but declined  
To lower levels. Nought of fear or awe,  
Nothing of love was mine. Wide-eyed I gazed,  
But saw no spiritual beam to blight

My brain with too much beauty, no undraped  
And awful majesty ; only a brute,  
Dumb charm, like that which draws the brute to it,  
Unknowing it is drawn. \* So gradually  
I knew a dull content o'ercloud my sense,  
And unabashed I gazed, like that dumb bird  
Which thinks no thought and speaks no word, yet fronts  
The sun that blinded Homer—all my fear  
Sunk with my shame, in a base happiness.

But as I gazed, and careless turned and passed  
Through the thick wood, forgetting what had been,  
And thinking thoughts no longer, swift there came  
A mortal terror : voices that I knew,  
My own hounds' bayings that I loved before,  
As with them often o'er the purple hills  
I chased the flying hart from slope to slope,  
Before the slow sun climbed the Eastern peaks,  
Until the swift sun smote the Western plains ;  
Whom often I had cheered by voice and word,  
Whom often I had checked with hand and thong ;—  
Grim followers, like the passions, firing me ;  
True servants, like the strong nerves, urging me  
On many a fruitless chase, to find and take

Some too swift-fleeting beauty ; faithful feet  
And tongues, obedient always. These I knew,  
Clothed with a new-born force and vaster grown,  
And stronger than their master ; and I thought,  
What if they tare me with their jaws, nor knew  
That once I ruled them,—brute pursuing brute,  
And I the quarry? Then I turned and fled,—  
If it was I indeed that feared and fled—  
Down the long glades, and through the tangled brakes,  
Where scarce the sunlight pierced ; fled on and on,  
And panted, self-pursued. But evermore  
The dissonant music which I knew so sweet,  
When on the windy hills, and vales deep-set,  
And whispering pines it came ; now far, now near,  
As from my rushing steed I leant and cheered  
With voice and horn the chase, this brought to me  
Fear of I knew not what, which bade me fly,  
Fly always, fly ; but when my heart stood still,  
And all my limbs were stiffened as I fled,  
Just as the white moon ghost-like climbed the sky,  
Nearer they came and nearer, baying loud,  
With bloodshot eyes and red jaws dripping foam ;  
And when I strove to check their savagery,  
Speaking with words ; no voice articulate came,

Only a dumb, low bleat. Then all the throng  
Leapt swift on me, and tore me as I lay,  
And left me man again.

Wherefore I walk  
Along these dim fields peopled with the ghosts  
Of heroes who have left the ways of earth  
For this faint ghost of them. Sometimes I think,  
Pondering on what has been, that all my days  
Were shadows, all my life an allegory;  
And, though I know sometimes some fainter gleam  
Of the old beauty move me, and sometimes  
Some beat of the old pulses, that my life,  
For ever hurrying on in hot pursuit,  
To fall at length self-slain, was but a tale  
Writ large by Zeus upon a mortal life,  
Writ large, and yet a riddle; for sometimes  
I read its meaning thus : Life is a chase,  
And man the hunter, always chasing on,  
With hounds of rushing thought or fiery sense,  
Some hidden truth or beauty, fleeting on  
For ever through the thick-leaved coverts vast  
And wind-worn wolds of life. And if we turn  
A moment from the hot pursuit to seize  
Some chance-brought sweetness, other than the search

To which our life is set,—some dalliance,  
Some outward shape of Art, some lower love,  
Some charm of wealth and sleek content and home,—  
Then, if we check an instant, the swift chase  
Of fierce untempered energies which pursue,  
With jaws unsated and a thirst for life,  
Bears down on us with clanging shock, and whelms  
Our prize and us in ruin.

And sometimes

I seem to myself a thinker, who at last,  
By some dark lake of thought unknown, unseen,  
Amid the chase and capture of low ends,  
Comes one day on some perfect truth, and looks  
Till the fair vision blinds him heart and brain,  
And, all his former nature hurrying on,  
The strong brute forces and unchecked desires,  
Finding him bound and speechless, think him now  
No more their master, but some soulless thing ;  
And leap on him, and seize him, and possess  
His life, till through death's gate he pass to life,  
And his own ghost revives. But looks no more  
Upon the truth unveiled, but through a cloud  
Of creed and faith and longing, which shall change  
One day to perfect knowledge.

But whoe'er  
Shall read the riddle of my life, I walk  
In this dim land amid dim ghosts of kings,  
As one day thou shalt ; meantime, fare thou well."

Then passed he ; and I marked him slowly go  
Along the winding ways of that dim land,  
And vanish in a wood.

Sudden I saw  
Two who together walked : one with a lyre  
Of gold, which gave no sound ; the other hung  
Upon his breast, and closely clung to him,  
Spent in a tender longing. As they came,  
I heard her gentle voice recounting o'er  
Some ancient tale, and these the words she said :  
" Dear voice and lyre now silent, which I heard  
Across yon sullen river, bringing to me  
All my old life, and he, the ferryman,  
Heard and obeyed, and the grim monster heard  
And fawned on you. Joyous thou camest and free  
Like a white sunbeam from the dear bright earth,  
Where suns shone clear, and moons beamed bright, and  
streams



---

Laughed with a rippling music (nor as here  
The dumb stream stole, the veiled sky slept, the fields  
Were lost in twilight). Like a morning breeze,  
Which blows in summer from the gates of dawn  
Across the fields of spice, and wakes to life  
Their slumbering perfume, through this silent land  
Where scarce a footstep sounds, nor any strain  
Of earthly song, you came ; and suddenly  
The pale cheeks flushed a little, the murmured words  
Rose to a faint, thin treble ; the throng of ghosts  
Pacing along the sunless ways and still,  
Felt a new life. Thou camest, dear, and straight  
The dull cold river broke in sparkling foam,  
The pale and scentless flowers grew perfumed ; last  
To the dim chamber, where with the sad queen  
I sat in gloom, and silently inwove  
Dead wreaths of amaranths ; thy music came  
Laden with life, and I, who seemed to know  
Not life's voice only, but my own, rose up,  
Along the hollow pathways following  
The sound which brought back earth and life and love,  
And memory and longing. Yet I went  
With half-reluctant footsteps, as of one  
Whom passion draws, or some high fantasy,

Despite himself, because some subtle spell,  
Part born of dread to cross that sullen stream  
And its grim guardians, part of secret shame  
Of the young airs and freshness of the earth,  
Being that I was, enchained me.

“Then at last,  
From voice and lyre so high a strain arose  
As trembled on the utter verge of being,  
And thrilling, poured out life. Thus closelier drawn  
I walked with thee, shut in by halcyon sound  
And soft environments of harmony,  
Beyond the ghostly gates, beyond the dim  
Calm fields, where the beetle hummed and the pale owl  
Stole noiseless from the copse, and the white blooms  
Stetched thin for lack of sun : so fair a light  
Born out of consonant sound environed me.  
Nor looked I backward, as we seemed to move  
To some high goal of thought and life and love,  
Like twin birds flying fast with equal wing  
Out of the night, to meet the coming sun  
Above a sea. But on thy dear fair eyes,  
The eyes that well I knew on the old earth,  
I looked not, for with still averted gaze  
Thou leddest, and I followed ; for, indeed,

While that high strain was sounding, I was rapt  
In faith and a high courage, driving out  
All doubt and discontent and womanish fear,  
Nay, even my love itself. But when awhile  
It sunk a little, or seemed to sink and fall  
To lower levels, seeing that use makes blunt  
The too accustomed ear, straightway desire  
To look once more on thy recovered eyes  
Seized me, and oft I called with piteous voice,  
Beseeching thee to turn. But thou long time  
Wert even as one who heard not, with grave sign  
And waving hand denying. Finally,  
When now we neared the stream, on whose far shore  
Lay life, great terror took me, and I shrieked  
Thy name, as in despair. Then thou, as one  
Who knows him set in some great jeopardy,  
A swift death fronting him on either hand,  
Didst slowly turning gaze ; and lo ! I saw  
Thine eyes grown awful, life that looked on death,  
Clear purity on dark and cankered sin,  
The immortal on corruption,—not the eyes  
That erst I knew in life, but dreadfuller  
And stranger ; as I looked, I seemed to swoon,  
Some blind force whirled me back, and when I woke

I saw thee vanish in the middle stream,  
A speck on the dull waters, taking with thee  
My life, and leaving Love with me. But I  
Not for myself bewail, but all for thee,  
Who, but for me, wert now among the stars  
With thy great Lord ; I sitting at thy feet.  
But now the fierce and unrestrained band  
Of passions woman-natured, finding thee  
Scornful of love within thy Thracian cave,  
With blind rage falling on thee, tore thy limbs,  
And left thee to the Muses' sepulture,  
While thy soul dwells in Hades ; but I wail  
My weakness always, who for Love destroyed  
The life that was my Love. I prithee, dear,  
Forgive me if thou canst, who hast lost heaven  
To save a loving woman."

He with voice

Sweeter than any mortal melody,  
And plaintive as the music that is made  
By the Æolian strings, or the sad bird  
That sings of summer nights :

" Eurydice,

Dear love, be comforted ; not once alone  
That which thou mournest haps, but day by day

Some lonely soul which walks apart and feeds  
On high hill pastures, far from the herds of men,  
Comes to the low fat fields, and sunny vales  
Joyous with fruits and flowers, and the white arms  
Of laughing love ; and there awhile he stays  
Content, forgetting all the joys he knew,  
When first the morning breaks upon the hills,  
And the keen air breathes from the Eastern gates  
Like a pure draught of wine ; forgetting all  
The strains which float, as from a nearer heaven,  
To him who treads at dawn the untrodden snows,  
While all the warm world sleeps ;—forgetting these,  
And all things that have been. And if he gain  
To raise to his own heights the simpler souls  
That dwell upon the plains, the untutored thought,  
The museless lives, the unawakened brain  
That yet might soar, then is he blest indeed.  
But if he fail, then leaving love behind,  
The wider love of the race, the closer love  
Of some congenial soul, he turns again  
To the old difficult heights, and there alone  
Dwells, till the widowed passions of his heart  
Tear him and rend his soul, and drive him down  
To the low plains he left. And there he dwells,

Missing the sky, dearest, and the white peaks,  
And the light air of old ; but in their stead  
Finding the soft sweet sun of the vale, the clouds  
Which veil the heavens indeed, but give the rains  
That feed the streams of life and make earth green,  
And bring at last the harvest. So I walk  
In this dim land content with thee, O Love,  
Untouched by any yearning of regret  
For those old days ; nor that the lyre which made  
Erewhile such potent music now is dumb ;  
Nor that the voice which once could move the earth  
(Zeus speaking through it), speaks in household words  
Of homely love : Love is enough for me  
With thee, O dearest ; and perchance at last,  
Zeus willing, this dumb lyre and whispered voice  
Shall wake, by Love inspired, to such high note  
As mounts above the stars, and swelling takes  
Our souls to highest heaven."

Then he stooped,  
And, folded in one long embrace, they went  
And faded in the darkness.

Presently  
One other ghost I saw, a comely boy,  
With lip and cheek just touched with manly down,

And strong limbs wearing spring, in mien and garb  
A youthful chieftain, with a perfect face  
Of fresh young beauty, clustered curls divine,  
And chiselled features like a sculptured god,  
But warm and breathing life; only the eyes,  
The fair large eyes, were full of dreaming thought,  
And seemed to gaze beyond the world of sight,  
On a hid world of beauty. Him I stayed,  
Accosting with soft words of courtesy;  
And, on a bank of scentless flowers reclined,  
He answered thus :

“ Not for the garish sun  
I long, nor for the splendours of high noon  
In this dim land I languish ; for I mind  
How ofttimes when the swift chase swept along  
Through the brisk morn, or when my comrades stript  
For wrestling, or the foot-race, or to cleave  
The sunny stream, I loved to walk apart,  
Self-centred, sole ; and when the laughing girls  
To some fair stripling's oaten melody  
Made ready for the dance, I heeded not ;  
Nor when to the loud trumpet's blast and blare  
My peers rode forth to battle. For, one eve,  
In Latmos, after a long day in June,

I stayed to rest me on a wooded hill,  
Where often youth and maid were wont to meet  
Toward moonrise ; and deep slumber fell on me.  
Thinking of Love, just as the ruddy orb  
Rose on the lucid night, set in a frame  
Of myrtle and of sharp plane tremulous,  
Deep slumber fell, and loosed my limbs in rest.

Then, as the full orb poised upon the peak,  
There came a beauteous vision of a maid,  
Who seemed to step as from a golden car  
Out of the low-hung moon. No mortal form,  
Such as oft-times of yore I knew and clasped  
At twilight 'mid the vines at the mad feast  
Of Dionysus, or the fair maids cold  
Who streamed in white processions to the shrine  
Of the chaste Virgin Goddess; but a shape  
Richer and yet more pure. No thinnest veil  
Obscured her ; but each exquisite limb revealed,  
Gleamed like a golden statue subtly wrought  
By a great sculptor on the architrave  
Of some high temple vast—only in her  
Each limb was soft and warm, and charged with life  
And breathing. As I seemed to gaze on her,



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Nearer she drew and gazed ; and as I lay  
Supine, as in a spell, the radiance stooped  
And kissed me on the lips, a chaste, sweet kiss,  
Which drew my spirit with it. So I slept  
Each night upon the hill, until the dawn  
Came in her silver chariot from the East,  
And chased my Love away ; but ever thus  
Dissolved in love as in a heaven-sent dream,  
Whenever the bright circle of the moon  
Rose on the hills, whether in leafy June  
Or harvest-tide, or when they leapt and pressed  
Red-thighed the spouting must, I walked apart  
From all, and took no thought for mortal maid,  
Nor nimble joys of youth ; but night by night  
I stole, when all were sleeping, to the hill,  
And slumbered and was blest ; until I grew  
Possessed by love so deep, I seemed to live  
In slumbers only, while the waking day  
Showed faint as any vision.

So I turned

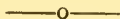
Paler and paler with the months, and climbed  
The steep with laboured steps and difficult breath,  
But still I climbed. Ay, though the wintry frost  
Chained fast the streams and whitened every hill,

I sought my mistress through the leafless groves,  
And slumbered and was happy, till the dawn  
Returning found me stretched out, cold and stark,  
With life's fire nigh burnt out. Till one clear night,  
When the birds shivered in the pines, and all  
The inner heavens stood open, lo! she came,  
Brighter and kinder still, and kissed my eyes  
And half-closed lips, and drew my soul through them,  
And in one precious ecstasy dissolved  
My life. And thenceforth ever on the hill  
I lie unseen of man, a cold, white form,  
Still young, through all the ages; but my soul,  
Clothed in this thin presentment of old days,  
Walks this dim land, where never moonrise comes,  
Nor day-break, but a twilight waiting-time.  
No more; and, ah! how weary! Yet I judge  
My lot a higher far than his who spends  
His youth on swift hot pleasure, quickly past;  
Or those, my equals, who through long calm years  
Grew sleek in dull content of wedded lives  
And fair-grown offspring. Many a day for them,  
While I was wandering here, and my bones bleached  
Upon the hills, the sweet soft sun of June  
Broke, and the grapes grew purple. Many a day

They heaped up gold, they knelt at festivals,  
They waxed in high report and fame of men,  
They gave their girls in marriage; while for me  
Upon the untrodden peaks, the cold grey morn,  
The snows, the rains, the winds, the untempered blaze,  
Beat year by year, until I turned to stone,  
And the great eagles shrieked at me, and wheeled  
Affrighted. Yet I judge it best indeed  
To seek in life, as now I know I sought,  
Some fair impossible Love, which slays our life,  
Some high ideal raised too high for man;  
And failing to grow mad, and cease to be,  
Than to decline, as they do who have found  
Broad-paunched content and weal and happiness;  
And so an end. For one day, as I know,  
The high aim unfulfilled fulfils itself;  
The deep, unsatisfied thirst is satisfied;  
And through this twilight, broken suddenly,  
The inmost heaven, the lucent stars of God,  
The Moon of Love, the Sun of Life; and I,  
I who pine here—I on the Latmian hill  
Shall soar aloft and find them."

With the word,  
The faint sun shot a beam athwart the fields,

And woke them, and the thrush from out the yew  
Sang out reveillé to the coming day,  
Soldier-like ; and the pomp and rush of life  
Chased those young ghosts of time, and left me there,  
A modern in the old age of the world.



*SONG.*

OH ! were I rich and mighty,  
With store of gems and gold,  
And you, a beggar at my gate,  
Lay starving in the cold ;  
I wonder, could I bear  
To leave you pining there ?

Or, if I were an angel,  
And you an earth-born thing,  
Beseeching me to touch you  
In rising with my wing ;  
I wonder should I soar  
Aloft, nor heed you more ?

Or, dear, if I were only  
A maiden cold and sweet,  
And you, a humble lover,  
Sighed vainly at my feet ;  
I wonder if my heart  
Would know no pain or smart ?

*THE ENIGMA.*

THE gaslights flutter and flare  
On the cruel stones of the street,  
And beneath in the sordid glare  
Pace legions of weary feet ;  
Fair faces that soon shall grow hard,  
Shy glances already grown bold,  
The wrecks of a girlhood marred  
By shame and hunger and cold.

But here, as she passes along,  
Is one whose young cheek still shows,  
'Mid the pallid, pitiful throng,  
The fresh bloom of a tender rose.  
Not long has she walked with vice,  
A recruit to the army of Ill,  
A fresh lamb for the sacrifice  
That steams up to Moloch still.

And the spell through which youth draws all,  
The faint shyness in hurrying walk,  
The lithe form slender and tall,  
The soft burr in her simple talk,  
Constrains the grave passer, whose brain  
Is long leagues of fancy apart,  
To thrill with a sudden pain  
And an emptiness of heart.

Poor child ! since it is not long  
Since you were indeed but a child,  
A gay thing of bird-like song,  
And even as a bird is wild ;  
With no shadow of thought or care,  
Laughing all the sweet hours away,  
When every morning was fair,  
And every season a May.

Through the red fallow on the hill  
The white team laboured along,  
While you roamed the green copses at will,  
And mimicked the cuckoo's song ;

While they tossed and carried the hay,  
While the reapers were hid in the wheat,  
You had only to laugh and to play,  
Or to bathe in the brook your feet.

For your mother left you a child,  
Your rough father's pride and joy :  
Rejoiced that his girl was as wild  
And fearless as any boy.  
Though you would not plunder the nest,  
Nor harry the shrieking hare,  
You could gallop bare-backed with the best,  
And knew where the orchises were.

“ Like a boy ” was what they said,  
With your straight limbs and fearless face ;  
Like a girl in the golden head,  
Gay fancies, and nameless grace.  
Like a boy in high courage and all  
Quick forces, and daring of will ;  
Like a girl in the peril to fall,  
And innocent blindness to ill.



And even now, on the sordid street,  
As you pass by the theatre door,  
You bring with you some freshness sweet  
Of the brightness and breezes of yore.  
Not yet are the frank eyes grown bold,  
Not yet have they lost all their joy ;  
Not yet has time taken the gold  
From the short crisp curls of the boy.

And if truly a boy's they were,  
Not thus would he pace forlorn ;  
Nor would careless passers-by dare  
To shoot out the lips of scorn.  
Is it Nature or man that makes  
An unequal judgment arraign  
Those whose equal nature takes  
The mark of the self-same stain ?

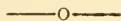
Leaving this one shame and disgrace ;  
Leaving that one honour and fame ;  
To this one confusion of face,  
To that one a stainless name :

A high port and respect and wealth  
For the one who is guilty indeed,  
While the innocent walks by stealth  
Through rough places with feet that bleed.

Do I touch a deep ulcer of Time,  
A created or ultimate ill,  
A primal curse or a crime,  
Self-inflicted through ignorance still?  
But meanwhile, poor truant, you come  
With a new face year after year,  
Leaving innocence, freedom, and home  
For these dens of weeping and fear.

To decline by a swift decay,  
To a thing so low and forlorn,  
That, for all your fresh beauty to-day,  
It were better you never were born;  
Or to find in some rare-sent hour,  
As a lily rooted in mire,  
Love spring with its pure white flower  
From the lowest depths of desire.

Heaven pity you ! So little turns  
The stream of our lives from the right ;  
So like is the flame that burns  
To the hearth that gives warmth and light ;  
So fine the impassable fence,  
Set for ever 'twixt right and wrong,  
Between white lives of innocence  
And dark lives too dreadful for song.



*TO THE TORMENTORS.*

DEAR little friend, who, day by day,  
Before the door of home  
Art ready waiting till thy master come,  
With monitory paw and noise,  
Swelling to half delirious joys,  
Whether my path I take  
By leafy coverts known to thee before,  
Where the gay coney loves to play,  
Or the loud pheasant whirls from out the brake  
Unharm'd by us, save for some frolic chase,  
Or innocent panting race ;  
Or who, if by the sunny river's side  
Haply my steps I turn,  
With loud petition constantly dost yearn  
To fetch the whirling stake from the warm tide ;  
Who, if I chide thee, grovellest in the dust,  
And dost forgive me, though I am unjust,  
Blessing the hand that smote ; who with fond love  
Gazest, and fear for me, such as doth move

Those finer souls which know, yet may not see,  
And are wrapped round and lost in ecstasy ;—

And thou, dear little friend and soft,  
Breathing a gentle air of hearth and home ;  
Whose low purr to the lonely ear doth oft  
With deep refreshment come ;  
Though thy quick nature is not frank and gay  
As that one's, yet with graceful play  
Thou dost beguile the evenings, and dost sit  
With mien demurely fit ;  
With half-closed eyes, as in a dream  
Responsive to the singing steam,  
Most delicately clean and white,  
Thou baskest in the flickering light ;  
Quick-tempered art thou, and yet, if a child  
Molest thee, pitiful and mild ;  
And always thy delight is, simply neat,  
To seat thee faithful at thy master's feet ;—

And thou, good friend and strong,  
Who art the docile labourer of the world ;  
Who groanest when the battle mists are curled  
On the red plain ; who toilest all day long

To make our gain or sport ; who art the care  
That cleanses idle lives, which, but for thee  
And thy pure, noble nature, perhaps might sink  
To lower levels, born of lust and drink,  
And half-forgotten sloughs of infamy,  
Which desperate souls could dare ;—  
And ye, fair timid things, who lightly play  
By summer woodlands at the close of day ;—  
What are ye all, dear creatures, tame or wild ?  
What other nature yours than of a child,  
Whose dumbness finds a voice mighty to call,  
In wordless pity, to the souls of all  
Whose lives I turn to profit, and whose mute  
And constant friendship links the man and brute ?  
Shall I consent to raise  
A torturing hand against your few and evil days ?

Shall I indeed delight  
To take you helpless kinsmen, fast and bound,  
And while ye lick my hand  
Lay bare your veins and nerves in one red wound,  
Divide the sentient brain ;  
And while the raw flesh quivers with the pain,  
A calm observer stand,

And drop in some keen acid, and watch it bite  
The writhing life : wrench the still beating heart,  
And with calm voice meanwhile discourse, and bland,  
To boys who jeer or sicken as they gaze,  
Of the great Goddess Science and her gracious ways ?

Great Heaven! this shall not be, this present hell,  
And none denounce it ; well I know, too well,  
That Nature works by ruin and by wrong,  
Taking no care for any but the strong,  
Taking no care. But we are more than she ;  
We touch to higher levels, a higher love  
Doth through our being move.  
Though we know all our benefits bought by blood,  
And that by suffering only reach we good ;  
Yet not with mocking laughter, nor in play,  
Shall we give death or carve a life away.

And if it be indeed  
For some vast gain of knowledge, I might give  
These humble lives that live,  
And for the race should bid the victim bleed,  
Only for some great gain,  
Some counterpoise of pain ;

And that with solemn soul and grave,  
Like him who from the fire 'scapes, or the flood,  
Who would save all, ay, with his heart's best blood,  
But of his children chooses which to save !

Surely a man should scorn  
To owe his weal to others' death and pain ?  
Sure 'twere no real gain  
To batten on lives so weak and so forlorn ?  
Nor were it right indeed  
To do for others what for self were wrong.  
'Tis but the same dead creed,  
Preaching the naked triumph of the strong ;  
And for this Goddess Science, hard and stern,  
We shall not let her priests torment and burn :  
We fought the priests before, and not in vain ;  
And as we fought before, so will we fight again.



*CHILDREN OF THE STREET.*

BRIGHT boys vociferous,  
Girl children clamorous,  
Shrill trebles echoing,  
Down the long street.  
Every day come they there,  
Afternoon foul or fair,  
Shouting and volleying.  
Through wintry winds and cold,  
Through summer eves of gold,  
Running and clamouring.  
Never a day but brings,  
Ragged and thinly clad,  
Waking the city air,  
Battling with poverty,  
Hunger, and wretchedness,  
Brave little souls forlorn,  
Gaining hard bread.

“Terrible accident;  
Frightful explosion, Sir;  
News from Australia,  
News from America;  
Only one halfpenny,  
Special edition, Sir,  
*Echo, Sir, Echo!*”

Thus they shout breathlessly,  
Dashing and hurrying,  
Threading the carriages,  
Under the rapid feet;  
Frighting the passer-by,  
Down the long street:  
On till they chance to meet  
Some vague philosopher.

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And straightway the hurry,  
And bustle, and noise,  
Fade away in his thought  
Before tranquil joys.  
Here are problems indeed,  
Not to solve, it is true,

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But on every side filling  
The fanciful view ;  
Which ere he has grasped them  
Are vanished and gone,  
But leave him in solitude  
Never alone.  
Thoughts of Fate, and of Life,  
And the end of it all,  
Of the struggle and strife  
Where few rise, many fall ;  
Thoughts of Country and Empire,  
Of Future and Past,  
And the centuries gliding  
So slow, yet so fast.  
Old fancies, yet strange,  
Thoughts sad and yet sweet,  
Of lives come to harvest,  
And lives incomplete ;  
Of the slow-footed march,  
Of the Infinite plan,  
Bringing slowly, yet surely,  
The glory of man ;  
Of our failures and losses,  
Our victory and gain ;

Of our treasure of hope  
And our Present of pain.  
And, higher than all,  
That these young voices teach  
A glowing conviction  
Too precious for speech ;  
That somewhere down deep  
In each natural soul  
Sacred verities sleep,  
Holy waterfloods roll ;  
That to young lives untaught,  
Without friend, without home,  
Some gleams of a light  
That is heavenlier come ;  
That to toil which is honest  
A voice calls them still,  
Which is more than the tempter's  
And stronger than ill.

For, poor souls, 'twere better,  
If pleasure were all,  
Not to strive thus and labour,  
But let themselves fall.  
They might gain, for a time,

Higher wages than this,  
And that sharp zest of sinning  
The innocent miss.  
They might know fuller life,  
And, should fortune befriend,  
Escape the Law's pains  
From beginning to end.  
Or, if they should fail,  
What for them does home bring  
Which should make of a prison  
So dreadful a thing?  
These children, whom formalists,  
Narrow and stern,  
Have denied what high principle  
Comes from to learn ;  
To whom this great empire,  
Whose records they cry,  
Is a book sealed as close  
As the ages gone by ;  
Who bear a name great  
Among nations of earth,  
But are English alone  
By the fortune of birth ;  
These young mouths that come

To a board well-nigh bare,  
Who elsewhere were riches,  
But here a grave care.

Great Empire ! fast bound  
By invisible bands,  
That convey to earth's limits  
Thy rulers' commands ;  
Who sittest alone  
By thy rude northern sea,  
On an ocean-built throne,  
The first home of the free,  
Whom thy tall chimneys shroud  
In a life-giving gloom ;  
Who clothest mankind  
With the work of thy loom ;  
Who o'er all seas dost send out  
Thy deep-laden ships ;  
Who teachest all nations  
The words of thy lips ;  
Who dispatchest thy viceroys  
Imperially forth  
To the palms of thy East  
And the snows of thy North ;

Who holdest vast empires  
Of dark subtle men  
By the might of just laws  
And the sword of the pen ;  
Who art planted wherever  
A white foot may tread,  
On the poisonous land  
Which for ages lies dead ;  
Who didst nourish the freeman  
With milk from thy breast,  
To the measureless Commonwealth  
Lording the West ;  
Who holdest to-day  
Of those once subject lands  
A remnant too mighty  
For weaklier hands ;  
Who in thy isle-continent,  
Hourly increased,  
Rearest empires of freemen  
To sway the far East ;  
Who art set on lone islets  
Of palm and of spice,  
On deserts of sand  
And on mountains of ice ;

Who bring'st Freedom wherever  
Thy flag is unfurled :  
The exemplar, the envy,  
The crown of the World !

What is't thou dost owe  
To these young lives of thine,  
What else but to foster  
This dim spark divine ?  
Think of myriads like these  
Without teaching or home,  
Who with pitiful accents  
Beseeching thee come ;  
Think how Time, whirling on,  
Time that never may rest,  
Brings the strength of the loins  
And the curve of the breast,  
Till, with poor minds still childish,  
These children are grown  
To the age that shall give them  
Young lives of their own ;  
Think of those, who to-day  
In the sweet country air  
Live, as soulless, almost,



As the birds which they scare ;  
Think of all those for whom,  
To the immature brain,  
The dull whirr of the loom  
Brings a throbbing of pain ;  
Think of those poor lives fallen  
Which never shall rise,  
For the lack of the warning  
Their country denies,—  
Fallen, ruined, and lost,  
Through all time that shall be,  
Fallen for ever and lost  
To themselves and to thee;—  
Thou who standest, girt round  
By strong foes on each side,  
Foes who envy thy greatness,  
Thy glory, thy pride ;  
Thou, who surely shalt need  
Heart and soul, brain and hand,  
Brain to plan, hand to bleed,  
For thy might, O dear land !

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Till, while slowly he pondered  
These thoughts in his brain,  
See ! there swiftly comes rushing  
A young troop again.

“Terrible accident;  
Frightful explosion, Sir ;  
News, Sir, from Germany ;  
Latest from India ;  
Special edition, Sir,  
Only one half-penny !”  
Thus the revoluble  
Assonant *Echo*

Again they shout breathlessly;  
Dashing and hurrying,  
Frighting the passer-by,  
Shouting and volleying,  
Bright boys vociferous,  
Girl-children clamorous,  
On till they meet again  
Some vague philosopher.

*SONG.*

AH ! well knows the poet that life is brief,  
Brief and fleeting, though knowledge is long.  
Death a murderer, Time a thief,  
And some passionate cry of a secular wrong,  
And some under-wail of a half-veiled grief :  
'Tis that sweetens his song.

For what, then, is life and the days that are done  
But the trivial tale of each fugitive day ?  
'Tis but a rising and setting of sun.  
And the songs are all dumb, and the birds fled away ;  
And the flowers as they fade, and the streams as they run,  
Proclaim him as they.

Consider he must, though the sum of his thought  
Were only assurance that thought is vain,  
False, and fleeting, and uselessly sought ;  
Barren and false as the sands of the main :  
A hopeless, perpetual quest, that is sought  
For ever in vain.

*A SEPARATION DEED.*

WHEREAS we twain, who still are bound for life,  
Who took each other for better and for worse,  
Are now plunged deep in hate and bitter strife,  
And all our former love is grown a curse ;  
So that 'twere better, doubtless, we should be  
In loneliness, so that we were apart,  
Nor in each other's changed eyes looking see  
The cold reflection of an alien heart :  
To this insensate parchment we reveal  
Our joint despair, and seal it with our seal.

Forgetting the dear days not long ago,  
When we walked slow by starlight through the corn ;  
Forgetting, since our hard fate wills it so,  
All but our parted lives and souls forlorn ;  
Forgetting the sweet fetters strong to bind  
Which childish fingers forge and baby smiles,  
Our common pride to watch the growing mind,  
Our common joy in childhood's simple wiles,  
The common tears we shed, the kiss we gave,  
Standing beside the open little grave ;

Forgetting these and more, if to forget  
Be possible, as we would fain indeed.  
And if the past be not too deeply set  
In our two hearts, with roots that, touched, will bleed ;  
Yet, could we cheat by any pretext fair  
The world, if not ourselves—'twere so far well—  
We would not put our bonds from us, and bare  
To careless eyes the secrets of our hell ;  
So this indenture witnesseth that we,  
As follows here, do solemnly agree.

We will take each our own, and will abide  
Separate from bed and board for all our life ;  
Whatever chance of weal or woe betide,  
Nought shall re-knit the husband and the wife.  
Though one grow gradually poor and weak,  
The other, lapt in plenty, will not heed ;  
Though one, in mortal pain, the other seek,  
The other may not answer to the need ;  
We, who through long years did together rest  
In wedlock, heart to heart, and breast to breast.

One shall the daughter take, and one the boy,—  
Poor boy, who shall not hear his mother's name,

Nor feel her kiss ; poor girl, for whom the joy  
Of her sire's smile is changed for sullen shame :  
Brother and sister, who, if they should meet,  
With faces strange, amid the careless crowd,  
Will feel their hearts beat with no quicker beat,  
Nor inward voice of kinship calling loud :  
Two widowed lives, whose fulness may not come ;  
Two orphan lives, knowing but half of home.

We have not told the tale, nor will, indeed,  
Of dissonance, whether cruel wrong or crime,  
Or sum of petty injuries which breed  
The hate of hell when multiplied by time,  
Dishonour, falsehood, jealous fancies, blows,  
Which in one moment wedded souls can sunder ;  
But, since our yoke intolerable grows,  
Therefore we set our seals and souls as under :  
Witness the powers of wrong and hate and death,  
And this indenture also witnesseth.

*AN ODE TO FREE ROME.*

LEAP, all ye seven hills ; be glad, O hallowed ground,  
Built up of ruin through the infinite years ;  
Be glad, and let the sound  
Of joy arise, of joy unmixed with tears,  
Till all the sacred dust beneath  
Quicken from out the grasp of death,  
And Kingdom, Commonwealth, and Empire each,  
The will to govern and the brain to teach,  
Warrior and jurist, and the eloquent tongue,  
The plastic hand of art, the holy fire of song,  
Live once again, if ever they were dead.  
For now the night is past, the dawn is come ;  
The strength of evil spent, the black dream fled,  
After the age-long gloom the heavens grow red.  
Man, exiled long, turns to his ancient home :  
Once more, with longing hearts, the nations yearn ;  
Once more they call, with lips and eyes that burn,  
Thy name, regenerate Rome !

Old art thou, Rome, and worn :  
So old that scarce our eyes can trace  
The sum of centuries on thy face.  
So thick beneath thy soil the empires lie  
That Heaven's own air above thee seems to die ;  
And on thy plains forlorn  
By night the plague-mist broods with ghastly breath,  
And the chill leprous vapours settle down  
Even to the shrunken limits of the town.  
Old art thou, and to-day thy Romans dwell  
Nestling within the broken shell  
Of palace and of temple, and the hand  
Of cunning, vanished skill shines through the wall  
Of humble hovels tottering to their fall ;  
And oft the delvers 'mid thy ruins start  
To see some breathing miracle of art ;  
And fair tall columns stand,  
Amid the sordid present, like the ghost ;  
Showing from out the meanness of to-day  
The high hope sunk, the ruin, the decay,  
Of some once great ideal spent and lost.

Thou wert not pure nor good,  
O Rome, in those great days our hearts recall.



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On violence thy growing power was built,  
On violence and guilt ;  
The simpler lives that made thy Commonwealth,  
The general sober health,  
Were lived for power, and that through weary time  
The triumph to the Capitol might climb,  
With Death in its train ; and long before thy fall  
Thy sated eyes were daily drunk with blood,  
Thy pitiless hands were busy with scourge and chain.  
A proud cold mistress wert thou, stern and grave,  
Trampling out life and freedom from thy slave,  
Till the rude wild barbarians, one by one,  
Lost the fair pride and vigour of the free,  
And for their gods took luxury and thee.  
And ere thy race was run  
Thy mailed legions, speeding fast and far,  
O'er land and sea had borne the blight of war,  
Till the world lay asleep,  
And one foul canker of ignoble peace  
Consumed thee, slow and deep ;  
And amid dreamy languors of delight,  
And hot red flushes mixt of lust and blood,  
Rose-crowned thou satest, thy weary eyes aglow  
With death-throes of the nude young limbs below ;

And fierce prætorians hurling down  
The hardly conquered blood-stained crown ;  
And poison and plot, and nameless sloughs of sin.  
These were the joys thou gavest thy soul to win ;  
These the dead centuries brought, nor seemed as they  
would cease.

And then thou wert divided, and the rude  
Fierce savage from the boundless plain laid bare  
Thy fertile fields, and the slow-stealing tide  
Of ruin, oft beat back, broke high and higher,  
And low and lower ; like a dying fire  
Thy empire sank, till sink it might no more.  
And after long, long years  
Of rapine and of tears,  
Thou, the corrupt, the lewd,  
Forgetting all thy life that was before,  
The guilty, gave thy harlot limbs to wear  
The white robes of the saintly crucified ;  
And with vain sacrifice and heathen rite,  
And re-established idols, and the steam  
Of thy discarded censers, thou didst turn  
The God-sent words that burn,  
The pure commands of light,

Into a sickly sensual dream;  
And over all the past  
Didst such strange glamour cast,  
That thou, who once wert drunk with blood of saint  
And martyr—thou, who once didst flout and scorn  
The grand old kingdoms not of thee,  
Didst stoop to bend a lowly knee  
To a poor fisher, Hebrew born.  
Him by a foolish fable didst thou take  
For priest and ruler; and, with craft to make  
All things thy own, once more thou didst regain  
Thy old bad rule; and threats of pain  
And promise; bound with fierce constraint  
Thy conquerors, till thou cam'st to be  
The mistress of the world, the foe of all the free.

And then, oh Rome,  
Began thy worst abasement; for till now  
Thy vices were the vices of the strong,—  
Thy life as theirs in whom the tide  
Runs over-strong, and the hot pride  
Of life and all its fires so fiercely glow,  
That scarce amid the tumult and the throng  
They hear the sweet old voices come,

Telling of innocence and home.  
For always 'mid the turmoil and the din  
Of passion and the long laborious sin  
Pure voices rose : sweet bursts of song,  
Sage words of wisdom, histories fair,  
Immortal codes of laws, which still  
Downward the grateful centuries bear,  
Rhetoric which shall scarcely die,  
Philosophies remote and high,  
And breathing art ; and through the long  
Ages, one firm unswerving will  
Moulding the world, till man became  
Roman in soul and name.

But now thou knew'st to take  
Another form of rule, and thou, who erst  
Didst march with mail-clad warriors, battling down  
Opposing wills, and first among the first,  
Won'st from a conquered world the hard-earned crown,  
Now like a cold black snake  
Around the blighted souls of men didst glide,  
And with feigned messages of doom,  
And monstrous fable and immoral threat,  
A womanish, subtle conqueror, didst set

Thy foot upon mankind ; nor trick, nor cheat,  
Nor secret craft, nor wile, nor dark deceit,  
Nor hypocrite pretence didst leave untried,  
Nor thought nor deed of gloom.  
Thy empire thou didst base on groans and sighs  
Of lifelong captives shut from life and love,  
And at thy bidding all the sacred ties  
Of home thou didst unloosen and remove—  
All thought but thought for thee. So didst thou build  
Thy throne on suffering ; while thy pontiffs sate  
'Mid well-carved nymphs and pictures fair,  
And pagan joyance everywhere,  
And made their atheist fancies bold  
With philosophic sneers of old,  
As the augurs did ; and in the sacred name  
Of God, careless, and flushed with wine, they filled  
The sanctuary with revel, and the shame  
Of lust of power and greed insatiate ;  
And scoffed at Christ, and mocked the zeal  
Of those too faithful souls and pure,  
Whom faster far than chains of steel  
Their high religion could immure,  
And who, from convent prisons sad,  
Their impious feasts made glad.

Or these lewd triflers passed ; and then,  
Worse tyranny of purer men,  
Stern zealots who, believing, sought  
To kill the sacred life of thought  
By scourge, and chain, and axe, and stake,  
And o'er mind's seething ocean spread  
Such calm as when the winds are dead ;  
And not in vain, for year by year,  
Brought low by horrid chills of fear,  
The world's high pulse beat weak and faint,  
Till lying vision of sickly saint  
And fabulous dogma could replace  
The Pagan tenderness and grace.  
And o'er all lands thy priests swarmed far and near,  
Close to the blood-stained rulers' dying ear,  
With venal gloss for unrepented sin,  
And secret absolution, and did win  
The credulous faith of woman ; and if e'er  
Some bolder soul, grown jealous, turned to God  
From all thy forgeries, it with dreadful fear,  
And chain, and dungeon, and the iron rod,  
And blood and fire, thou didst subdue  
To thine own ends, and with a hideous skill  
Thou madest the whole world bow before thy will,

Till thy vast fable grew  
To a black nightmare, blighting heart and soul ;  
And ever with thy prisons filled with pain,  
And thy dark shadow, blasting the world's brain.  
So long time did the weary centuries roll,  
And thou didst wax and batten on the blood  
Of the innocent and good.

And then there came  
Another dawn with thunders, and the flame  
Of its red lightning flashed from soul to soul,  
And thought a waking giant rose and broke  
Thy hateful bonds, and soared to heaven and spoke  
The godlike words which erst thou didst control.  
And the dread salutary storm of war  
Burst o'er unhappy Europe far ;  
And the brave North from out its cold  
Gray, frozen plains rushed forth to meet  
The Pagan South, which at thy feet  
Had spent its manhood : and the bold  
High soul of England, she who sate  
Behind her sea-cliffs isolate.  
These spurned thy hateful yoke and thee,  
And, taking heart, grew great and free,

And overspread the world ; but thou,  
Knowing the voice of doom,  
Ruthless, with fire and sword didst trample out  
The nascent soul within thee, and enslave  
The whole fair South in blackest depths of gloom.  
There, in an ignorance too dark for doubt,  
And a worse death than that which feeds the grave,  
Thou didst engulf her. There did she remain,  
Dead, while life surged around her ; joy, and pain,  
High hopes, and aspirations, all forgot.  
There, chained to earth, the nations grovelled and were  
not,  
And there some grovel now.

Ah ! glorious city, what pangs were thine  
In those long shameful years !  
Cold as a corpse round which the graveclothes twine,  
Thou drank'st the cup of tears ;  
Thy vesture they divided, and did tear  
In sunder thy own Italy, fair and sweet.  
And thou could'st bear  
To see her trampled under alien feet !  
Sometimes thy sons, filled with such holy fire  
As in all time doth patriot hearts inspire,



Would rear thy fallen Commonwealth once more  
In vain, or else by burning words would strive  
To make the dry bones of thy Empire live;  
And then time fled, and voice and arm would fail,  
And death and silence reign. The day of doom,  
Which touched the souls of men with tongues of  
flame,  
Broke not on thee. Upon thy living tomb  
Of that great travail whence the freeman came,  
Stole but a passing murmur, quickly gone;  
And then thy hateful life crept smoothly on,  
Untroubled, as before. The tyrants slew  
And worked their selfish schemes of petty wrong  
Upon thy Italy, yet no lightning flash  
Shot from thy eyes, O mighty mother, to dash  
The spoiler to the earth; for thou wast bound  
In womanish fetters: sunk so sad, so deep,  
In such a lifeless lethargy profound,  
That no cry came to break thy shameful sleep:  
So well thy crafty guardians knew  
To stop thy ears; while to the far  
Dim ends of earth they stretched their hands,  
Armed with all pitiless commands,  
And mental tortures worse than death,

And sad confessions wrung from failing breath,  
And stamped out thought, and strove to still  
The world's great tumult to their will,  
And in this shameful mould recast  
Thy illimitable Past.

Slow is God's purpose deep,  
And slow the cycles creep  
To the full end; and we who know  
Fruitless the long years come and go,  
Fruitless the brief lives lived and spent  
To change the old wrong impotent;  
Who, while we hopeless droop and fade  
Beneath thick Error's poison shade,  
See it to glorious stature rise,  
And lose its summit in the skies—  
See a false halo shed round crime,  
And error consecrate by time  
Grow weary of delay, and fain  
The eternal purpose to arraign.  
Ah! blind and weak of faith; for, see,  
When least we think the thing shall be,  
By secret ways remote and still  
Fares on the one unchanging will,

By trackless paths ; in seasons known  
By one Intelligence alone ;  
And oft, when least we heed or think,  
Our footsteps tremble on the brink ;  
And often, when we seem to hold  
The future, with its store of gold,  
Lo ! quick the fairy gleam is gone,  
And leaves us hopeless and alone.

And so with thee :  
The furious storm of change had passed once more  
And left thee as before.  
There seemed no shadow on the glaring sky,  
No little cloud which any might descry ;  
A time no more of wild imaginings ;  
A time of mistresses and kings,  
Secret police, confessors, Bourbons, spies,  
Dark prisons filled with patriot sighs :  
Rome basking, with her vulture wings outspread,  
As if all nobler thoughts and dreams were dead ;  
O'er all our Europe not a breath or stir  
But foul intrigue of king and minister,—  
One deep corruption to replace  
The kindly ties of common race.

Secure thou seem'dst of ruin, ay, secure ;  
But, God be praised, not sure.

For lo ! from out that calm and silence deep,  
A loud and bitter cry !  
Europe, awaking from her nightmare sleep,  
Lifted her voice on high ;  
And the peoples who long time had crouched before  
That subtle deadly yoke,  
Had risen again, had risen and once more  
The voice of freedom spoke,—  
Whispered first with a low unmeaning murmur ;  
Then, 'mid fire and cannon smoke,  
Spoke out loud, as, with hand and voice grown firmer,  
The Revolution woke.  
And over many a fair and stately city  
The fiend of civil strife,  
Drunk with conquest, blind to reverence, dead to pity,  
Rose to an awful life,—  
Rose till all our Europe, trodden under  
The thing the priests had wrought,  
Rang with confused unmeaning thunder  
Of inarticulate thought ;  
And the lonely dreamer, stern and crimson-handed,

And the patriot mad with hope,  
And the zealot and the socialist, commanded  
More than Emperor or Pope.  
And they seized thee, and with joy and exultation  
Baptized thee, Commonwealth ;  
While thy Pontiff, long perplexed 'twixt Church and  
nation,  
Slunk out of thee by stealth.  
Till the legions of thy sister, France the glorious—  
She who once awoke the world—  
Over liberty and commonwealth victorious,  
Against thy life were hurled;  
And thou sankest down at last, though battling bravely  
For the freedom thou hadst won :  
Never losing heart, but striving sternly, gravely,  
Till hope and life were done.  
And o'er every race, from Germany enlightened  
To God-forgotten Spain,  
The chains of the oppressor's hand were tightened,  
The fetters forged again.  
Once more the informer ruled, the sleek confessor  
Sate by the ear of kings ;  
A nightmare on the race, a dark assessor  
Prompting to shameful things.

“All things are mine,” the priest said ; “I am master  
Of pomps, and thrones, and powers :”  
Nor marked the shadows ever gliding faster  
Of the inexorable hours !

For slowly in Time’s hidden womb  
Fate’s secret forces did mature.  
The silent energies obscure  
The destinies of doom ;  
And tiny Piedmont, set beneath the mountain,  
To one foreseeing brain  
Seemed the prime source, the fair upspringing fountain  
Of Italy again.  
And craft, than priestcraft subtler still,  
And cunning and unswerving will,  
These worked in silence long ; and then  
The rash Triumvir, king of men,  
The Roman without stain or guile,  
Rushed from his rocky sea-girt isle.  
And thy frank monarch marched, and he  
Who France enslaved but made thee free,  
And chased the spoiler out and broke his power,  
And drove him, beaten back, to fort and tower :  
And thou, rich Lombardy, wert free.

And over thee, fair Tuscany,  
The onward flowing tide of freedom broke,  
And kingdom after kingdom woke,  
Till last on thee, O sweet South, bound  
In utter darkness, prisoned and confined,  
There broke with high tumultuous sound  
An echo of the mighty northern wind.  
Again the red-clad dreamer rose  
And rushed unarmed upon his foes,  
And did prevail—such strength there is in faith—  
And did prevail.  
And all the dark and hateful things that be,  
All tools and instruments of tyranny,  
Fell from thy limbs and left thee free ;  
And at thy prison gate  
And hideous, rayless cell,  
No more the gaoler sate,  
Making the Paradise God made, a hell.  
And all was free through Italy, free, free,  
From thy cold Alp to burning Sicily :  
Free everywhere, O Rome, except for thee  
And thy gray, silent Venice weeping by the sea.  
  
And then thy force seemed spent again,

O Italy, and the slow crawling years  
Deferred thy fullness, till thy growing pain  
Prompted rash onsets checked in blood and tears ;  
Yet, through defeat thou didst advance and gain  
Thy Venice, and through defeat  
And agony of Mentana didst advance  
To destiny complete,  
Till thy too jealous sister, France—  
She who with foreign fanatic and fool  
Did buoy thy oppressor's rule—  
She, by strong blows from the victorious North,  
Broken and crushed, and sunk in ruin, fell ;  
And, with her trumpets sounding the swift knell  
Of priestcraft, Italy marched forth,  
And the priests' hirelings shrank and were afraid.  
And strong and calm, and gloriously arrayed,  
Thou sawest her conquering legions come ;  
And not in battle guise, or hasty strength,  
But after patient waiting, and at length,  
Thy Italy came home !

And time it was indeed  
She came ; ay, it was time ; for scarce had ceased  
The boldest utterance that ever priest



Had launched against our race.  
Ay! it was time indeed.  
Scarce had the echoes died within the hall,  
Where the weird power which tottered to its fall  
Spake forth with voice and threat more bold  
Than ever furious Pontiff launched of old,—  
Spake forth amid the sycophant crowd,  
The Jesuit suborned from every clime,  
The stolid Eastern left behind of time,  
The supple Italian mad for place;  
And those, the shame of every freer race,  
Who come to hate the liberty they know,  
And thoughts and lives that grow ;  
Who into freemen's gatherings slip—  
Smooth actors false, who play their part  
With tolerance upon the lip  
And tyranny at heart;  
The pale apostate, worldly wise ;  
The trickster bland with wolfish eyes.  
All these, and more, were there ;  
And with intrigue, and trick, and wile,  
Did each indignant soul beguile,  
Till the mild zealot of the pagan chair  
Stood forth amid the thunder and the flame ;

Stood forth—oh, blasphemy and shame !—  
Infallible—oh, mighty mocking name !—  
Infallible o'er peoples and o'er kings,  
Infallible o'er earthly thoughts and things.  
Too late to stay the madness and the crime,  
Thou camest, O Italy. Ay, 'twas time, 'twas time !

Yes ! it was time.

And now a Rome regenerate once more  
Amid her queenly cities sits sublime.  
Fair Venice, fresh like Cypris from the seas ;  
Ravenna, dim with hoary memories ;  
Milan, with spires of marble clustering white ;  
Genoa, on terraced hill-sides clear and bright ;  
Florence, the flower of cities ; and thou, fair town,  
On the blue crescent of whose bay,  
Though dynasties and nations pass away,  
The burning hill looks down  
That whelmed thy sisters ;—these  
And others, twinkling, like the Pleiades  
'Mid the large stars, with gems of form and hue  
Fairer than e'er thy ancient Romans knew,  
Kneel round thee where thou sittest as a Queen,  
Re-clothed with all the glories that have been.

The glories? Yes, but not the might  
That to the colder North has flown,  
To where she lieth—she,  
The little Island under grayer light,  
'Mid loud perpetual surges of the sea,  
By boisterous winds o'erblown,  
Seated upon two hemispheres, and can teach,  
As thou couldst once, a universal speech ;  
Or to the vast and thinly-peopled West,  
Unknown to thee, where humble homes are blest  
With deep content and plenty, though the State  
Grow rotten ; or, it may be, to the great  
Vast form which broods o'er Europe like a cloud,  
As did thy Goths ; or, maybe, to the strong,  
Stern race of banded freemen, which grows free  
Through bonds, and, gaining freedom, set thee free :  
Heirs of thy mail-clad legions gone before.  
Ah! mockery, that Time can do no more !

Ay! the long centuries mock us as they roll ;  
And we, we cannot tell  
To what far goal fares on the world's great soul,  
Whether to ill or well.  
Art thou indeed, black ghost,

For ever taken from our eyes and fled,  
Among the hateful growths long lapsed and lost,  
Which now are sunk and dead ?  
Or shalt thou from the coward fears of men  
Who hear the Atheist bray,  
And morbid doubters doubting heaven away,  
Grow strong to blight again ?  
Or shall a happier fate, great Church of old,  
The hidden riches of thy life unfold—  
Great Church which men have strangled !—till we see  
What sacred treasures, richer far than gold,  
What power of faith and ordered liberty,  
Thy nursing arms enfold ?  
Grant it, O saints on earth and saints above,  
Who have made pure her foulness with your love ;  
Grant it, pale monks, who from dim convent room  
Saw angels through the gloom ;—  
Grant it, sweet ministering women ; all  
Who raised, who raise to-day, the feet that fall ;  
Who for fair works of mercy live,  
To pray, to work, to succour, and to give ;—  
And ye who saw and drew the mother mild  
Adore the Eternal Child,  
Grant it, if e'er to mortal prayer 'tis given

To speed the will of Heaven ;—  
Grant that from out all changes there may come  
A new, regenerate Rome ! .

We know not, but 'tis clear  
Her old dominion comes not, and 'tis well ;  
For maybe, in some happy future near,  
Or maybe distant, comes a newer birth,  
A peaceful federation of the earth :  
Who shall discern or tell ?  
Is it a dream ? But in thy Senate, Rome,  
Which was a dream, a dreamer sits to-day—  
Two there were once, but one has passed away ;  
The mightier, amid the happy dead  
He dreams not any more—  
And one there is who bends a whitened head,  
A happy dreamer, who fulfilled his dream,  
And has attained his home,  
And dreams to-day of Tiber's deepened stream  
White with the sails of yore ;  
And dreams along thy poisoned, lonely plain—  
The work of long neglect and of the priest—  
The sounds of happy toil which long have ceased,  
The vine and corn again ;

The peace, the plenty, which thy Romans knew ;  
The glory, not the dominance of old ;  
The waving wheat, or maize with sheen of gold ;  
And, where the robber lurks upon the hill,  
Again the purple clusters fill ;  
Science to knit a long-dissevered race,  
And mild-eyed, gradual knowledge to efface,  
By tranquil method subtly strong,  
The centuries of ignorance and wrong ;  
The priest no ruler, but a friend  
To guide the feeble feet that heavenward tend ;  
Leaving, in place of his old rule,  
The simple teaching of the school,  
The vespers in the twilights dim,  
The children's voices in the innocent hymn,  
The blessed, saintly souls which take  
A life of pity for their Master's sake,  
A fuller life than that the Pagan knew ;  
O dreamer, dream thy dream, and dream it true !

*THE WRECK.*

THE mighty wind sings,  
The maddened surge rings,  
As the storm hurries by  
On invisible wings ;  
And the sails are close furled,  
And the sea-birds are whirled  
Through the night with a cry ;

And the great waves race past,  
And the ship drives on fast  
To the black rocks that frown ;  
And the horrible blast  
With its pitiless breath,  
Bringing horror and death,  
Drives them on, whelms them down.

Burst and break, wind and wave !  
Though no mortal may save  
The dear lives you destroy,  
From the depths of the grave  
They shall rise, ye shall fall.  
This life is not all ;  
Oh, great wonder and joy !

*WASTED.*

SUNK deep in indolent ease and sleep,  
Careless oft-times of speech and deed,  
With one ingrained conviction deep  
Of nothingness for faith and creed ;

And when pain came to him, or grief,  
Leaving the world and friends behind,  
And, faithful to his unbelief,  
Sowing his soul upon the wind.

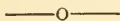
And yet we loved him, and lament  
A friend unselfish, kindly, true ;  
A candid nature sweet, content  
To think all good of those he knew.

Without one jealous thought or low,  
Without a faith, yet faithful found ;  
A surface-sceptic, deep below,  
By sacred faiths obliged and bound.



Not reverent, yet holding sure  
Some secret spring of reverence;  
Not innocent, yet white and pure  
In love and awe of innocence.

It must be it is well with him  
Who loved so much. Beyond our ken  
He holds him, in some Eden dim,  
Who raised and blessed the Magdalen.

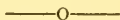
*SURSUM !*

FROM kingly palaces  
And golden throne,  
From castled battlements  
Princely and lone,  
From lowly cottages,  
From crowded factories,  
From prison-fortresses,  
Awake ! arise !

Awake, O souls ! arise ! clothe yourselves—faster, faster :  
For, hark ! the throng, the pomp, the trumpets of the  
Master.

Ye shall not hesitate,  
Nor stay to say  
Why go we to the gate  
Ere yet 'tis day ;  
Above the cataract,  
Beyond the avalanche,  
On topmost pinnacle,  
'Tis day ! 'tis day !

'Tis day, O souls, 'tis day ! oh, hasten—faster, faster !  
How shall you naked face the eye, the gaze, of the  
Master ?



*SONG.*

THEY mount from glory to glory,  
They sink from deep unto deep,  
They proclaim their sweet passionate story,  
They tremble on chords that weep,  
And with them my soul spreads her wings,  
And my heart goes out to them and sings.

And chord into chord interlaces,  
Like the leaves that protect some fair bloom;  
And with subtle and tremulous graces,  
And tender lights dappled with gloom,  
Like the fall of an ocean-borne bell,  
The harmonies quicken and swell.

Then swift from those languishing voices  
And accents which marry and die,  
Like the sound of a trumpet, rejoices  
One clear note unfaltering high;  
And my soul, through its magical power,  
Bursts and dies like an aloe in flower.

*ANCHORED.*

BEYOND the scorching plain  
Of the trackless rippled shore,  
The heaped-up tides complain  
As if they came no more;  
And in the glaring light  
Of the slow-declining day,  
The far-off sails gleam white  
As the great ships go their way;  
And in the cliff garden so fair  
A young maid with a rose in her hair.

The garden beds are sweet  
With their shining laurel bowers,  
Soft turf for lightsome feet,  
Heart's-ease and gilly-flowers,  
Lush roses white and red,  
And speckled lilies large,  
Passion-flowers overhead,  
Framing the blue sea-marge;  
But from the sweet blooms at her side  
Her eyes look out over the tide.

And suddenly there springs  
    Upon the wide sea plain,  
A breeze like fanning wings,  
    And life revives again.  
The pearly lines of foam  
    Steal onwards, crisp and sweet,  
Till to the cliffs they come,  
    And eddy at their feet ;  
And wavelet on wavelet the tide  
Races on through the harbour wide.

And the stranded hulls which lay  
    All the long day black and dead,  
Swing round to the freshening spray,  
    And spread their white wings overhead ;  
And the gulls mew their strange sea song,  
    And all sea things that be,  
On the hot sand fainting long,  
    Revive with the kiss of the sea ;  
And a sail comes up, ghostly and white,  
To where it shall sojourn to-night.

And over the harbour bar,  
    Within the deep-sunk pier,

While the sunset glows afar,  
The homeward ship draws near;  
And, lo ! one with straining sight  
Upon the broad deck sees  
A waving gleam of white  
Up amid the garden trees ;  
And the anchor leaps out with deep sound,  
And two hearts with it bound after bound.

And when twilight begins to fade,  
Just before the low-hung moon,  
Through the perfumed garden shade  
The full waves murmur a tune.  
Heart's-ease and gilly-flowers,  
Lush roses white and red,  
And amid the happy bowers  
The passion-flowers overhead :  
Ah, Time, that thy steps are so fleet !  
Ah, Life, thou art fair ! thou art sweet !

*SOULS IN PRISON.*

I THOUGHT that I looked on the land of the lost,  
A stony desert, arid and bare,  
Gray under a heavy air.

Not a bird was there, nor a flower, nor a tree,  
Nor rushing river, nor sounding sea ;  
And I seemed to myself like a ghost.

A land of shadows, a herbless plain,  
A faint light aslant on the barren ground,  
And never a sight nor a sound :

Only at times, of invisible feet,  
Wearily tracking one dull, sad beat,  
Too spiritless to complain ;

And of faces hid by a blank white mask,  
From which there glared out cavernous eyes,  
Full of hate and revolt and lies :

As if the green earth on which others live  
Had nothing of hope or of fear to give  
But a hopeless, perpetual task.

Far in the distance a vast grey pile  
Stretched out its spider-like, echoing ways  
In long centrifugal rays ;

And sometimes dimly I seemed to see  
Dumb gangs of poor workers, fruitlessly  
Bent in hard tasks useless and vile,

To which, issuing silent, in single rank,  
Along narrow pathways stony and blank  
The hopeless toilers would come.

Or else each was idly cooped in a cell  
Narrow, and gloomy, and hard, as hell,  
Which was all that they knew of home.



And around them frowning, grimy and tall,  
With no ivy or lichen, a circling wall  
Shut God and life utterly out ;

And in the midst, with unclosing eye,  
A muffled watcher stood silently,  
As they paced about and about.

Never alone—for, wherever they went,  
From some central tower an eye was bent  
Along all the long, straight-drawn ways.

Never alone—for an unseen eye,  
As the stealthy footstep went noiselessly by,  
Swept each lonely cell with its gaze.

Always alone—for in all the throng  
No word or glance as they shuffled along  
But the order-word, sharp and loud.

Always alone—for in all the crowd  
No glance of comfort from pitying eyes  
Might pierce through the thick disguise.

Nor, if husband were there, or child, or wife,  
Could the subtle communion of love and life  
Escape that terrible eye.

Yet husbands and wives and children there were,  
Young limbs, and age bent in a dumb despair,  
Too strong or too weak to die.

Nothing remained, as it seemed, but thought  
Of the old hopes vanished and come to nought,  
And the hopeless, perpetual care,—

Nought but to sit, as the night would fall,  
Tracing black ghosts on the blank white wall  
In a silent rage of despair ;

Or, before the dull daylight began to break,  
To start at the iron-tongued summons and wake  
To the curse of another day.

And so, in silence, to brood and plot  
To regain the poor freedom and life which were not,  
Though it bartered a soul away ;

Or, later, to cherish the old offence  
With a secret lurking devil of sense,  
And a spring of desire self-bent,

Till at last all longing was sunk and spent  
In a lifeless, fathomless slough of content.  
Not repentance, nor fear, nor grief,

Nor belief at all, nor yet unbelief ;  
But a soul which skulks from itself like a thief,  
And is damned for ever and dead.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thus I thought to myself ; and, though straight I saw  
It was only the house of retributive Law,  
I shuddered and shrank, and fled.

*FREDERIC.*

As these sheets came in from the printer,  
My lad who had brought me them said,  
“Please, Sir, as I passed his office,  
They told me that Frederic was dead.”

And I knew in a moment thrill through me,  
First a keen little pang and smart,  
Then a sudden revolt and rebellion  
Seize on me and fill my heart,

As he went on with boyish prattle,  
Before I had courage to speak :  
“He died of consumption, they said, Sir ;  
And he earned sixteen shillings a week.”

“How old was he?” “Just seventeen, Sir :  
He had grown very tall and white.”  
And I thought of the childish features,  
The bright cheeks, and the eyes still more bright,

When, withdrawn from his school far too early,  
He came with his treasured prize,  
To show to his new-found master,  
With a simple pride in his eyes;

And how it soon proved that his writing  
Was so clear, and skilful, and fine,  
That I set him the task to decipher  
The hieroglyphs which are mine.

'Twas four years ago ; and so splendid  
Did my first book of songs appear,  
That, though oftentimes already rejected,  
I despatched them this time without fear.

Nor in vain. And now many friends know them,  
And critics are kindly in praise,  
But the cold little hand that adorned them  
Has cast up the brief sum of its days.

Sixteen shillings ! this pittance could purchase  
The flower of those boyish years !  
This could narrow that humble ambition  
To dull entries, whose total is tears !

This young life which was bursting to blossom,  
Which had borne its own fruitage one day,  
Had those budding days mingled together  
Slow labour with healthfuller play.

Is it man that has done this, or rather,  
These dead blasts that blow, blow, blow, blow,  
Week by week, month by month, till beneath them  
Life withers and pulses beat slow?

The dull winds that to-day are slaying  
Young and old with their poisonous breath,  
Which slew the rash singer who praised them,  
Not the less with a premature death.

Is it man with bad laws and fools' customs,  
False pride, poverty, ignorant greed?  
Is it God making lives for His pleasure,  
Dooms these innocent victims to bleed?

Great riddle which one day shall be clearer,  
Be our doubts with all reverence said;  
But a strong power constrained me to write them,  
When I heard little Frederic was dead.

*TO MY MOTHERLAND.*

DEAR motherland, forgive me, if too long  
I hold the halting tribute of my song;  
Letting my wayward fancy idly roam  
Far, far from thee, my early home.  
There are some things too near,  
Too infinitely dear  
For speech ; the old ancestral hearth,  
The hills, the vales that saw our birth,  
Are hallowed deep within the reverent breast :  
And who of these keeps silence, he is best.

Yet would not I appear,  
Who have known many a brighter land and sea  
Since first my boyish footsteps went from thee,  
The less to hold thee dear ;  
Or lose in newer beauties the immense  
First love for thee, O birth-land, which fulfils

My inmost heart and soul,—  
Love for thy smiling and sequestered vales,  
Love for thy winding streams which sparkling roll  
Through thy rich fields, dear Wales,  
From long perspectives of thy folded hills.

Ay! these are sacred, all;  
I cannot sing of them, too near they are.  
What if from out thy dark yews, gazing far,  
I sat and sang, Llangunnor! of the vale  
Through which fair Towy winds her lingering fall,  
Gliding by Dynevor's wood-crowned steep,  
And, alternating swift with deep,  
By park and tower a living thing  
Of loveliness meandering;  
And traced her flowing, onward still,  
By Grongar dear to rhyme, or Dryslwyn's castled hill,  
Till the fresh upward tides prevail,  
Which stay her stream and bring the sea-borne sail,  
And the broad river rolls majestic down  
Beneath the gray walls of my native town.

Would not my fancy quickly stray  
To thee, sea-girt St. David's, far away,



A minster on the deep ; or, further still,  
To you, grand mountains, which the stranger knows  
Eryri throned amid the clouds and snows,  
The dark lakes, the wild passes of the north ;  
Or Cader, a stern sentinel looking forth  
Over the boisterous main ; or thee, dear Isle  
Not lovely, yet which canst my thought beguile—  
Mona, from whose fresh wind-swept pastures came  
My grandsire, bard and patriot, like in name  
Whose verse his countrymen still love to sing  
At bidding-feast or rustic junketing ?

Ah, no ! too near for song, and ye too near,  
My brethren of the ancient race and tongue ;  
The bardic measures deep, the sweet songs sung  
At congresses, which fan the sacred fire  
Which did of old your ancestors inspire ;  
The simple worship sternly pure,  
The faith unquestioning and sure,  
Which doth the priest despise and his dark ways,  
And riseth best to fullest praise  
Beneath some humble roof-tree, rude and bare,  
Or through the mountains' unpolluted air ;  
Who know not violence nor blood,

And who, if sometimes ye decline from good,  
Sin the soft sins which gentler spirits move,  
Which warmer Fancy breeds, and too much love.

I may not sing of you,  
Or tell my love—others there are who will,  
Who haply bear not yet a love so true  
As that my soul doth fill—  
If to applause it lead, or gain, or fame ;  
Better than this it were to know the pain  
Which comes to higher spirits when they know  
They fire in other souls no answering glow :  
Love those who love me not again,  
And leave my country nought, not even a name.

FINIS.





# SONGS OF TWO WORLDS.

(SECOND SERIES.)



## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"Some three years ago a first batch of 'Songs of Two Worlds' called forth favourable comments from several competent critics. In some of them the rhyme was woven with art and melody, to represent the beautiful things of external life; others evinced a scholar's insight into deeper philosophies, and bespoke habitual converse with classic models. We are glad to find that there is a sufficient number of readers of healthy poetry to have encouraged this second venture.

"In earnestness, sweetness, and the gift of depicting nature, the writer may be pronounced even now a worthy disciple of his compatriot, Henry Vaughan, the silurist. . . . Several of the shorter poems are instinct with a noble purpose and a high ideal of life. One perfect picture, marginally annotated, so to speak, in the speculations which it calls forth from the writer, is 'The Organ-Boy.' But the most noteworthy poem is the 'Ode on a Fair Spring Morning,' which has somewhat of the charm and truth to nature of 'L'Allegro and Il Penseroso.' As a whole this ode is perhaps the nearest approach to a masterpiece in the volume. We can find no fault with it unless it be a seeming violation in the unities, and we cannot find too much praise for its noble assertion of man's resurrection and renovation."—*Saturday Review*, May 30th.

"In everything that respects form it would have been very difficult indeed to surpass some of the poems in the earlier series, to which we tried to do justice at the time of their appearance. If in any respect this second series can be said to be superior to the first, it is in a certain mellowness and warmth of tone of which hardly more than the promise was given in the earlier book. The very first poem in the volume is proof of this. It is styled, 'To an Unknown Poet,' and is a reminiscence of the writings of Henry Vaughan, the silurist, whose quaint, tender reveries, breathing health, as they come to us across what seems an artificial atmosphere, well deserve the celebration. It is a wonderful combination of insight, melody, picture, and suggestion, and it is as finished as it is full of subdued emotion. 'The Organ-Boy' brings out a strong contrast in a most powerful and felicitous way; the 'Ode on a Fair Spring Morning' is full of touches that show how deeply the spirit of this singer has been moved by many of the grand problems of the time, and indeed there is a whole section of the poem which might be profitably analysed on this ground had we but space."—*British Quarterly Review*, July 1st.

## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS (*continued*).

"This volume is a real advance on its predecessor of the same name, and contains at least one poem of great originality, as well as many of much tenderness, sweetness, and beauty. The poem which marks the volume as that of a man who has a poetic initiative of his own, as well as a considerable power of expression for the commoner moods and feelings, is the very striking one on 'The Organ-Boy,' which we have read again and again, with fresh pleasure on every reading. It is to our minds a little poem of which even a first-rate poet might be proud. The very graphic picture of the little Italian boy, with which it opens, so soon passing into a reverie on the past history of the wonderful nation from which these picturesque little immigrants come to us . . . the stately passage on the destinies of England, and the graceful description of the childish crowd flocking about the Italian organ-boy and enjoying his music, at the close, make altogether as exquisite a little poem of ten pages as we have read for many a day. But we must not lead our readers to suppose that this very beautiful poem, though far the finest in the volume, is at all alone in its power to fascinate them. We earnestly hope that the third series, of which the author holds out some promise, may be as much of an advance on the second as the second is on the first, and, if so, that his poetic publications will not end there, but that he will attempt something of more solid and lasting mould."—*Spectator*, June 13th.

"Some of his smaller lyrics are very perfect, and bear the marks of careful finish and the advantage of that good taste, which is a sixth sense—essence and completion of all the rest—to writers in general. His larger poems charm us less. He has caught the true cadence from the Herricks and Lovelaces. . . . This is the very daintiest of love-making, and we do not know that any one else quite modern has done it so well. The verses—though there is a line or two which might be mended—are full of melodious charm, and sing themselves almost without music. If we have got a new maker of songs in the 'New Writer,' we may well congratulate ourselves and all the world of singers."—*Blackwood's Magazine*, August 1st.

"When two years ago the first series of 'Songs of Two Worlds' appeared, we did not join the loud chorus of praise. We could of course see in it much that was beautiful, but also much which was vague and crude. We are bound to say that the second series is a very great improvement upon the first. The writer has gained a greater mastery over the mere mechanism of verse. He has acquired, too, a vigour of style without losing any of the tenderness and mystic feeling which distinguished his earlier poems."—*Westminster Review*, July 1st.

"There are perhaps fewer marks of sustained effort in the second series of 'Songs of Two Worlds' than appeared in the earlier series which 'A New Writer' gave to the world some two years ago. But a warm welcome is due to this pleasant and able volume of poems, which is marked by distinctness of aim, artistic clearness of execution, and that particular imaginative lustre which

## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS (*continued*).

belongs to the truly poetic mind. The author has learned in many schools without any sacrifice of his own individuality. He often recalls Wordsworth, but not a Wordsworth who, when experience had calmed the hot passions and dissipated the extravagant hopes of youth, could turn himself aside from painful problems, or look at them only when reflected on the face of nature, as on a still lake. The 'New Writer' is a man of his day, seeing beauty and yet coping with difficulties; at one time bursting into a pleasant love song, at another facing the obstinate questionings of intellect, or trying what light can be thrown by imagination into the depths of science."—*Guardian*, Sept. 16th.

"We have already had occasion so highly to commend the author of 'Songs of Two Worlds,' that praise now seems almost superfluous. But we may congratulate the anonymous author on having faithfully performed the rich promise which was held forth in his first book. It seems that the world may expect a third and final volume; none will welcome its appearance more gladly than ourselves, and no one will more sincerely regret that it should be the writer's last. When this author first challenged the public we were amongst the first to recognise the sterling merit of his verses and to predict for him a possible future; now we are naturally glad to see that he has not falsified our prediction. There is, as a rule, the same power of rhythm, the same facility of rhyme, the same deep thought underlying delicacy of diction which distinguished the earlier issue. As songs nothing could surpass some of the shorter pieces."—*Graphic*, Oct. 17th.

"This second series is in every sense a continuation of the first. It will be gratefully welcomed by all who have read the first, as a help to the more intimate knowledge of a poet whose first work came so unmistakably out of an admirable and amiable nature; but it opens up no new vein of feeling, and marks no new stage in the writer's mastery of verse. In this second series there are fewer traces than in the first of the writer's spiritual struggles in his search through sciences and creeds for a resting-place of belief; we see here rather the victory of the heart over the distresses of the intellect. We are glad that the writer promises a third series, and we hope that we shall have more in the vein of the 'Ode on a Fair Spring Morning,' and the exquisitely written ballad of 'Gilbert Beckett and the Fair Saracen.'"—*Examiner*, June 6th.

"It is sometimes easier to speak of a second book than of a first, because a critic has only to consider the quality of an author's success when the public has determined the quantity of the success already. The reception of the 'New Writer's' first series shows that, in his degree, he is one of the poetical forces of the time. . . . Of the school of poetry of which Horace is the highest master the 'New Writer' is a not undistinguished pupil. 'In Memory of a Friend' reminds us of Matthew Arnold by the union of clearness, sobriety, and refinement, though the 'New Writer,' with less elevation, less subtlety, and less austerity, has more warmth and perhaps more care."—*Academy*, August 11th.

## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS (*continued*).

"Of the first series of 'Songs of Two Worlds' by a 'New Writer' we spoke with high praise. The author, whose name remains even now concealed and unknown, although the success of his first work is undoubted, has just issued a second—a volume, we think, far in advance of the earlier one—more mature, less imitative, and possessing in a greater degree those excellences which made the former one so remarkable. The diction is even more exquisite and polished; there is the same unmistakable lyrical cry, albeit its tone is somewhat subdued; the same broad human sympathy, the same deep reverent spirit, the same grace and purity, resembling the beauty and repose of the statue rather than the loveliness of the living form. . . . How different in execution and spirit is this exquisite song to much that is styled genuine poetry at the present day. The irreverent, the intolerant, the indelicate, should all ponder well over many pieces in this volume, they will be made stronger in faith, more charitably inclined, purer, and more manly, if they will only learn aright the lessons taught. Their love for what is beautiful in nature will be increased, and they will have a deeper sympathy with their fellow-men."—*Civil Service Gazette*, May 23rd.

"When the first series of 'Songs of Two Worlds' appeared we were glad to welcome a singer who showed such depth of insight and imagination, whose verse was marked by such simplicity and melody of expression. As is not very often the case with a second series, this one is superior to the first. It reveals not only the same chastity and clearness of form, the same depth and genuineness of experience, but here and there more warmth of colouring, and we are fain to think this book will raise the reputation of the writer and gain him a hearing where before, owing to a certain reserve and 'cultured calm,' he might have been denied it, or have been but tentatively read. Clear it is that no person of the least sensitiveness could read a few pages of this volume and deny that the writer possesses the 'vision of the poet.' The glance, the touch, the hint, the suggestion, suffices, and you have not only a picture but a series of pictures; the imagination is moved, and in being moved is satisfied. In that remarkable poem, 'The Organ-Boy,' we not only have a picture but a contrast, which reveals to us implicitly (as of course should be the case) a whole philosophy of national greatness and causes of decline. We wish we had space to quote at length from the poem with which this volume opens. 'To an Unknown Poet' (Henry Vaughan, the silurist) is very stately, sweet, and finished, and indicates to us several affinities of the author, giving it thus a determined critical value. Of the poems we can say no more and no less than this, that they are quick with wisdom and high thought, touched with phantasy, and flowing easily into imaginative forms, which calls readily to its service an exquisite sense of the music of words."—*Nonconformist*, June 24th.



## SONGS OF TWO WORLDS.

(THIRD SERIES.)



### OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"The third series is not unworthy of its predecessors. It presents the same command of metre and diction, the same contrasts of mood, the same grace and sweetness, perhaps the same strength and weakness, as the volumes which have already met with so favourable a reception. The writer has ample command of musical and vigorous diction, and of varied and skilful rhythm. . . . To take a common and familiar object and show forth its ideal side with graceful skill and delicate imagination, to see the poetry and pathos of daily life, is the special power which he possesses ; and this he enjoys to a degree which poets of greater range might envy. . . . On the whole, it cannot be denied that he has won a definite position among contemporary English poets. If we cannot as yet place him in the front rank, yet he has written enough to show that he has powers which may some day make good his claim to it."—*Times*, October 16th.

"The new series contains, besides a number of shorter pieces, three poems of an important character, 'Evensong,' 'From Hades,' and an enthusiastic ode to Free Rome. The first-named poem shows power, thought, and courage to grapple with the profoundest problems. In the ode we acknowledge worthy treatment of the subject and passionate expression of generous sympathy. Yet we incline to hope for the development of his poetic career rather in such finished and highly-wrought pictures as 'From Hades.' The poet here exhibits a congenial grace of description and a delicate touch, which only a true scholar, who also possessed an adequate sense of the requirements of English poetry,

## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS (*continued.*)

could apply. The author might be trusted to tread classic paths of song without fear of swerving from the clear and statuesque grace of the models. . . . The songs in this volume have in general the same excellence as those in the former series. Songs and classical sketches, however, do not content a singer of our author's aspirations, and he is never more worth a hearing than when he allows us an insight into his views of what should be a poet's scope and standard. . . . It is to be hoped he is not serious in his apparent hesitation as to continuing his labours."—*Saturday Review*, July 31st.

"This volume is more perfect in execution than either of its predecessors. . . . The pure lyrics are sweeter and richer. . . . The poem which seems to indicate most of that rich pictorial imagination, which after all must be the main strength of the poet, is 'From Hades.' The legends of Actaeon, of Orpheus, and of Endymion are told with an originality of touch that gives them new force and beauty. Nothing could be much finer in its way than the interpretation of the transformation of Actaeon after his vision of Artemis. Of the three, however, the finest on the whole is that of Eurydice's mind as she describes her own awakening in Hades to the music of her husband's lyre. . . . The whole picture is so beautiful that we must give it complete. . . . In 'The Birth of Verse' every stanza is a little poem in itself, and yet a part of a perfect whole. Criticism is a dim and groping art at best, but in the present case it is even more dull and groping than usual, if we are mistaken in supposing that the man who wrote those stanzas ought to have in him what will give him a permanent, though probably a modest, place in the line of English poets."—*Spectator*, May 22nd.

"The author's healthiness and uprightness of feeling refresh one like a cold air after a hot and sultry day. 'The Home Altar' should in future adorn every collection of English religious verse. But by far the best poems in the book are two that stand side by side, one inaptly called a 'Song,' the other 'At Last.' The former is a very fine and delicate poem. 'At Last' is more exquisite still. . . . Not hawthorn blossom, muffling the warm earth as the slow night-wind stirs it, falls more fragrantly, more softly than the exquisite cadence of these verses. . . . The farewell that he threatens cannot be permitted. Such singers are not lightly to be spared."—*Examiner*, May 8th.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS (*continued.*)

"At last we have the promised third series, and we imagine that all its readers will rejoice with us. . . . If each book that he publishes is to mark as steady improvement as have his second and third, the world may surely look for something from the New Writer which shall immortalize him and remain as a treasure to literature."—*Graphic*, June 5th.

"The concluding series of this popular work is quite worthy of its predecessors, and it is pleasant to find that the author has already begun to reconsider his intention of writing, or at any rate printing no more poetry."—*Academy*, May 29th.

"This volume will not fail to maintain the writer's reputation. It lacks none of the simplicity and clearness of his former volumes, while in depth and dramatic range it shows decided advance. There are at least two poems here which will take high rank—'Children of the Street' and 'From Ilades.' The latter presents a series of pictures fresh, clear, delicate, and bathed in imaginative light. We hope that the writer's farewell may not be in any sense final."—*British Quarterly Review*, July 1st.

"The high hopes we had been led to entertain are here realized. And this is saying much. We have the same simplicity of style, the graceful ease of phrase, the subtle thought kept in due check by reference to rhythmical effects. But over and above these qualities we have now a depth of tone and colouring. The writer's dramatic range has widened. . . . At one page he is celebrating the doubts bred of science, and the Pantheism which most often flows from them, and on the next the poor little 'Arabs' enlisted in the sale of the cheap newspapers have due celebration. . . . By his emotion their situation is made to intersect with the whole mystery of life, and that more successfully than was even the case with that wonderful piece in the last volume, 'The Organ-Boy,' one of the most powerful and finished poems of the kind we have read for long. 'Evensong' is set on a higher key, and traverses a lofty range of thought and sentiment. It is quite impossible to give any idea of the stateliness and reach of this poem. We despair of doing justice to this choice volume by extract. Every page would afford remark, and tempt to analysis and characterization."—*Nonconformist*, May 19th.

## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS (*continued.*)

"It would be well indeed if our more successful versifiers, as a rule, fulfilled their early promise as calmly, equably, and melodiously as the author. The plain fact is that the anonymous poet claims for the third time our attention, on grounds far more valid than those of mere novelty. His range of moral sympathy is large, his intellectual view is wide enough to embrace a great variety of subjects, and his delicate sense of verbal fitness, and the nicer shades of manner leads him to remind us continually of other writers, without any sacrifice of his own independence and originality. . . . To these examples of two manners we might add specimens of at least a third and a fourth, but a sufficiently potent individuality breathes through them all. His farewell will be reciprocated with equal cordiality, and we might add to it a sincere *au revoir* if we knew either his face or his name."—*Guardian*, September 1st.

"He does not merely, like so many of his contemporaries, possess the accomplishment of verse, but has a genuine and apparently natural gift of song. He has mastered the difficult art of writing in English."—*Daily News*, June 12th.

"Gifted with real poetic insight, with an admirable power of expression, and with a deep sympathy with the nobler currents of modern thought. . . . In all we mark those excellences which have given him a special and distinguished place amongst modern English poets."—*Leeds Mercury*, July 7th.

"The third series will do more than either of those that have preceded it to place the reputation of the writer on a high pinnacle. . . . It shows, if possible, more exquisite finish. These poems are full from beginning to end of the true spirit of poetry; they are keenly perceptive, spontaneous, and possessed by the spirit of the beautiful and true. Every piece has the simple grace and beauty, the sweetness, the honesty, the earnestness, which poetry should have. . . . The verses are like the pure running stream. You may see every thought in them as clearly as the pebbles at the bottom of a crystal brook."—*Scotsman*, May 7th.



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